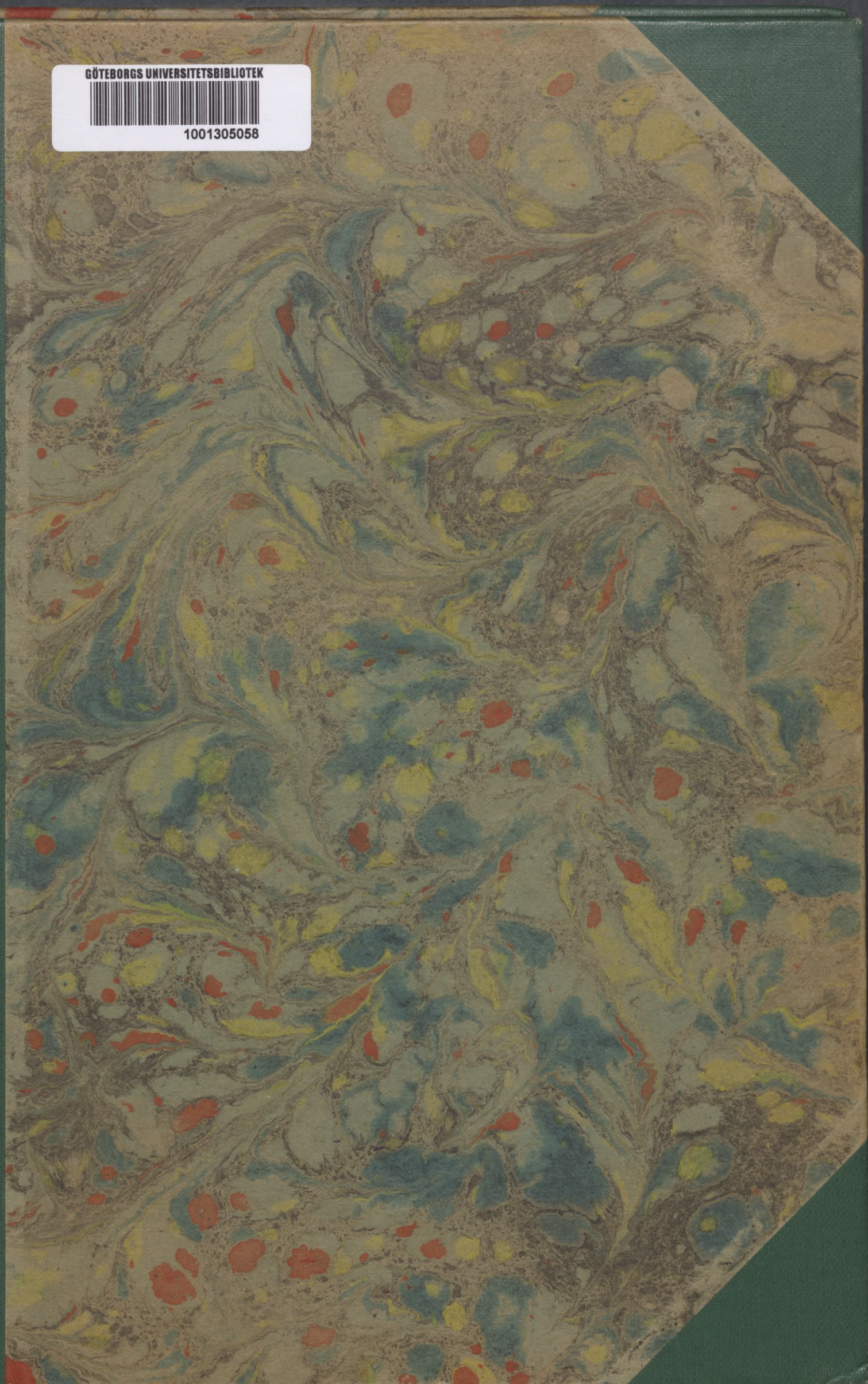


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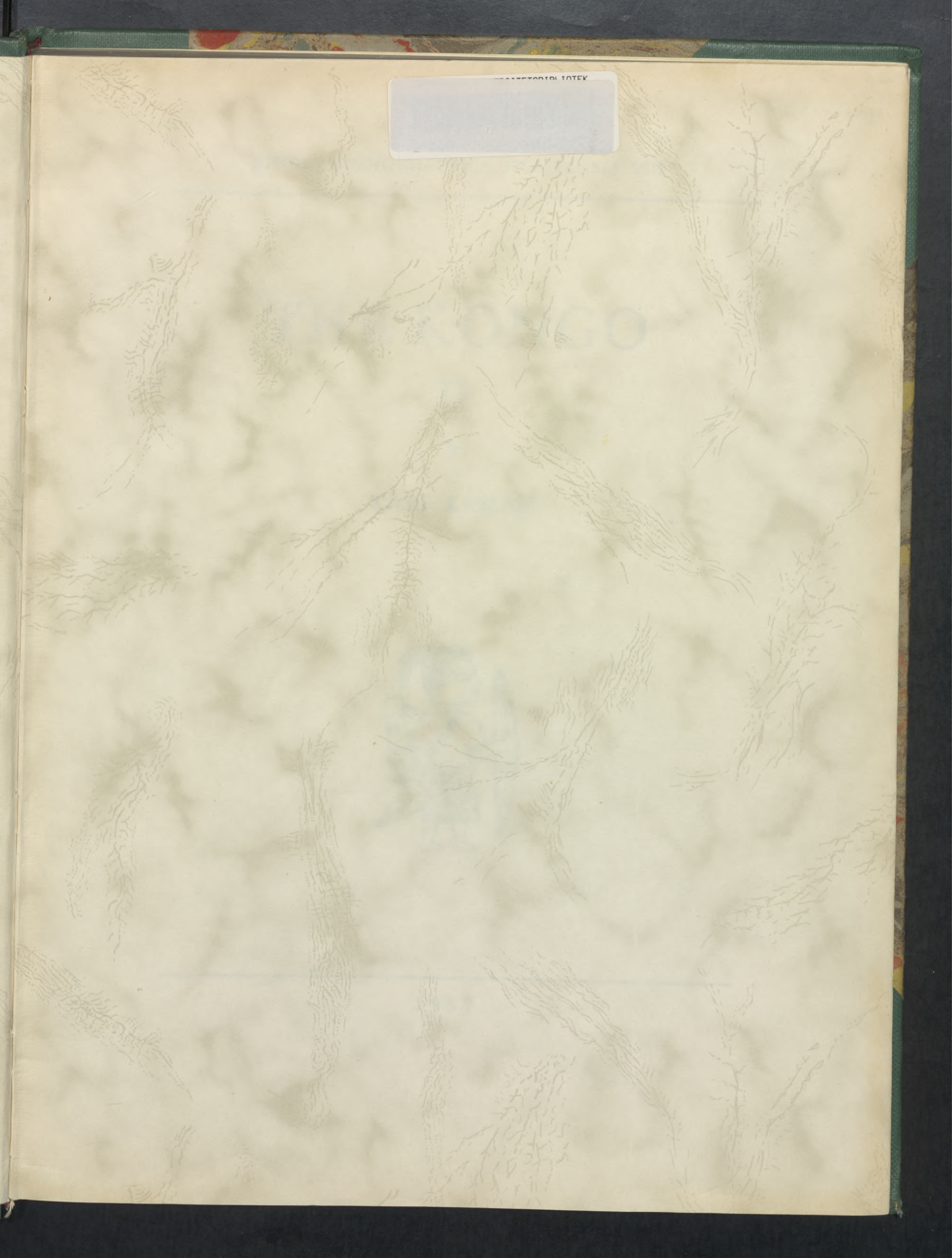


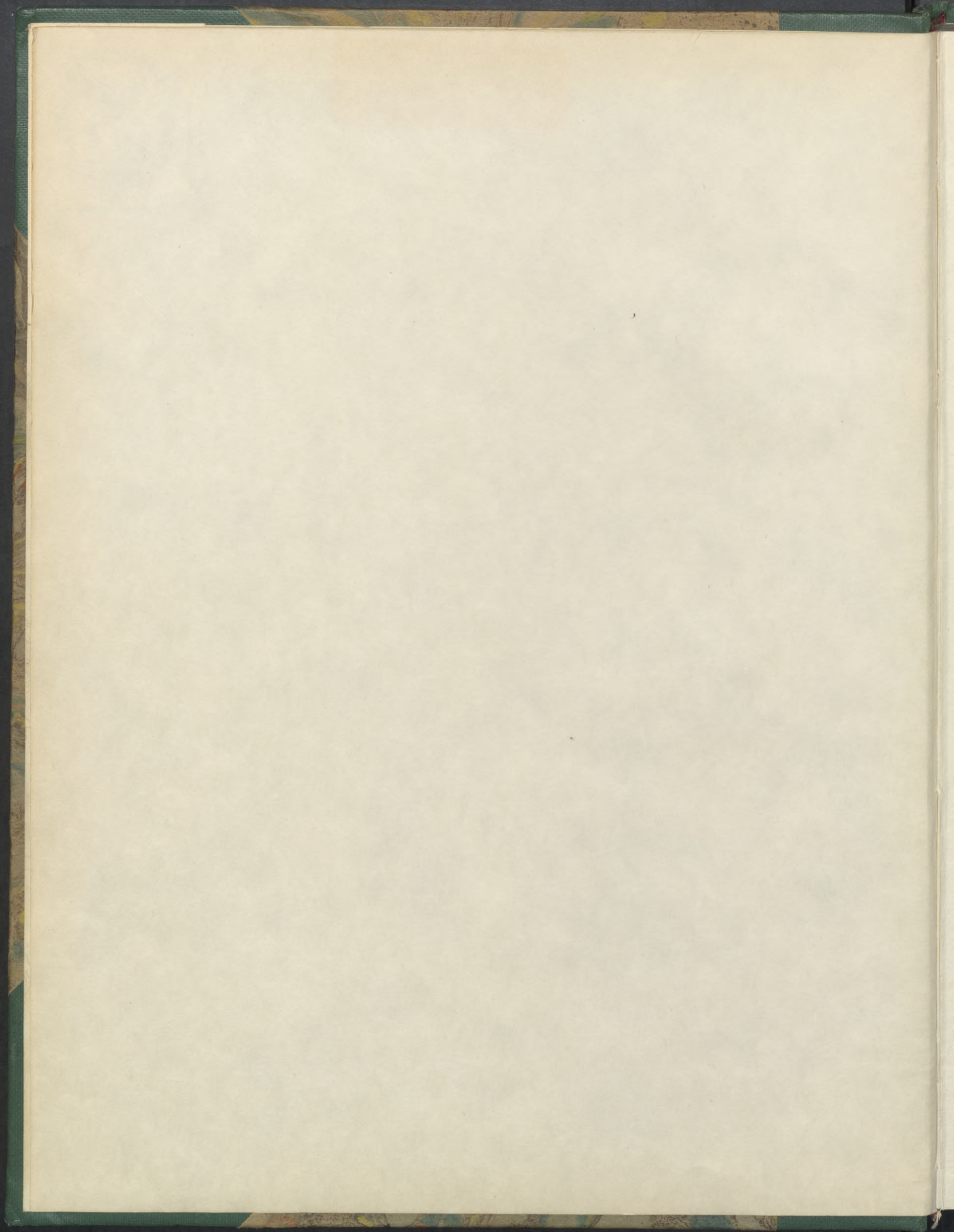


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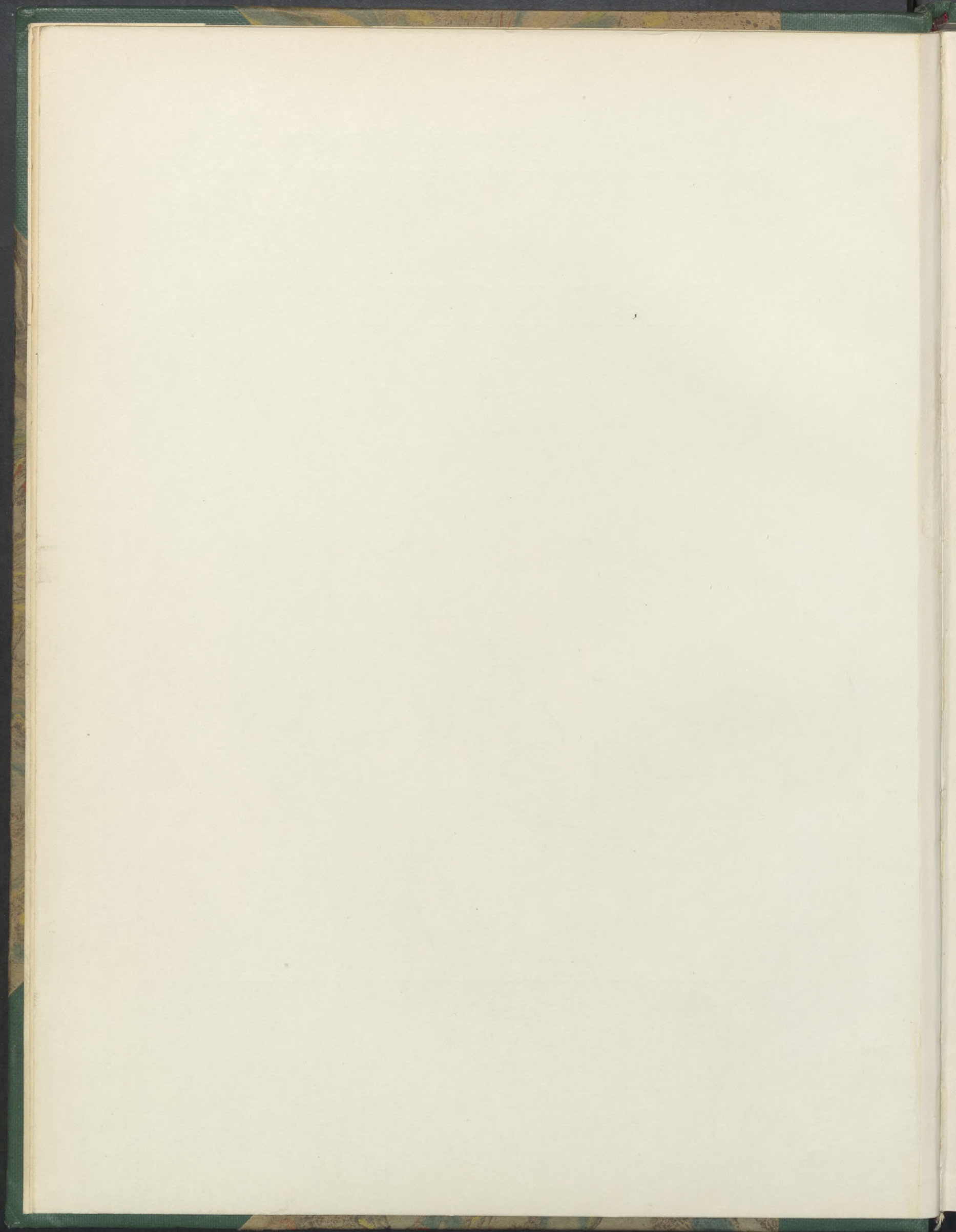
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by

KARL LAMAN

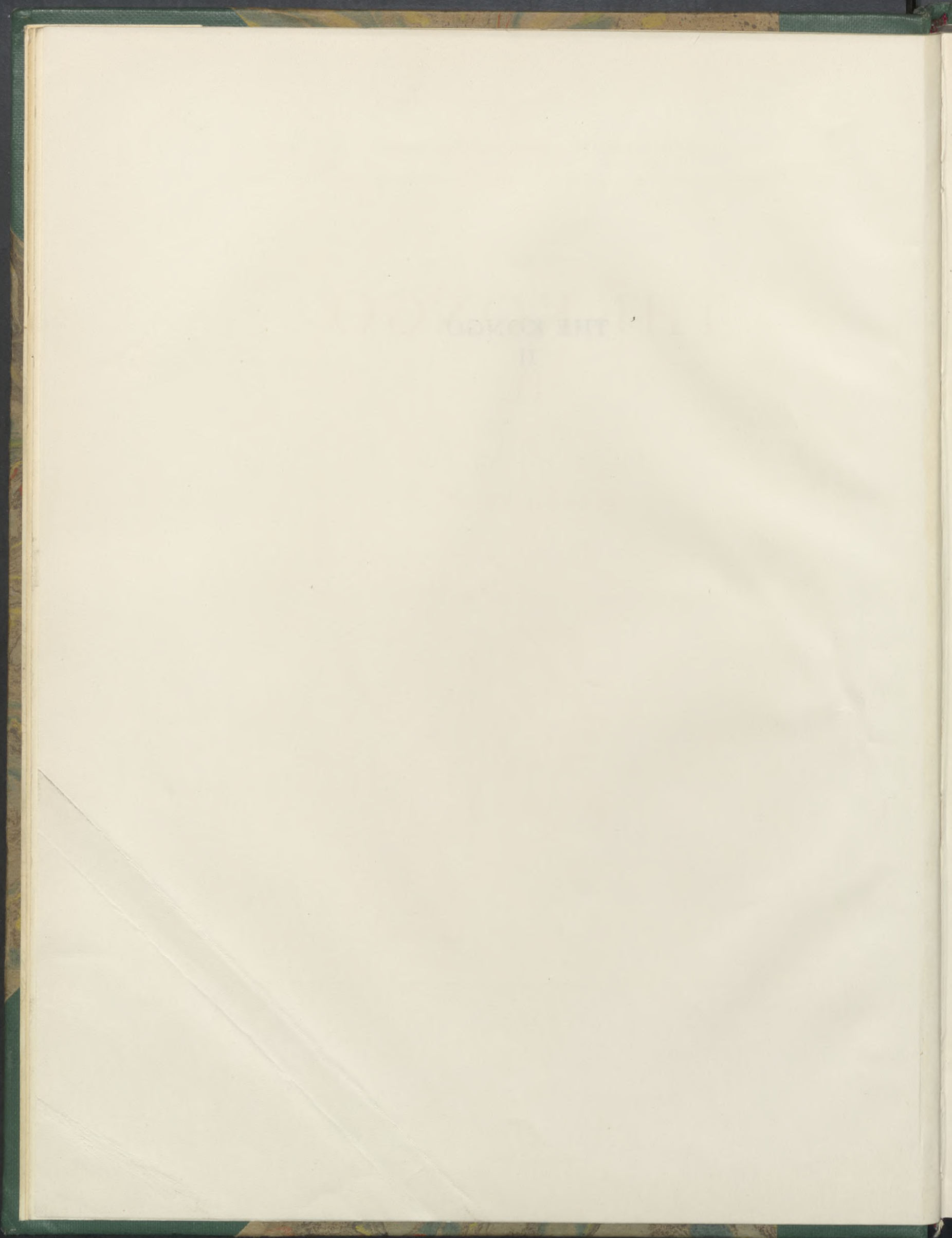


1957



THE KONGO
II

KARL LORAN



STUDIA ETHNOGRAPHICA UPSALIENSIA. VIII

THE KONGO

II

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KARL LAMAN



1957

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PREFACE

In publishing this part of the late missionary KARL LAMAN's work the same rules have been observed as in the publication of Part I. Thus LAMAN's chapter sequence has been followed while repetitions and contradictions have been eliminated as far as possible. A short, contradictory section with two genealogical tables has been excluded. The chapter on diseases has been rearranged with the help of Docent IVAR WERNER, and the final check with the original manuscript, which is written in Kongo, has been performed by Fil. Dr. EFRAIM ANDERSSON. The illustrated objects from LAMAN's collection were placed at my disposal through the kindness of Prof. SIGVALD LINNÉ (The State Ethnographic Museum, Stockholm). The drawings have been done, with unfailing interest and accuracy, by Mr. HARALD FAITH-ELL (Stockholm). The translation of what from many points of view proved to be a very difficult text has been carried out with great skill by Mr. DONALD BURTON (Stockholm). To all those here mentioned, whose collaboration has made possible the presentation of this manuscript, I wish to convey my deeply felt gratitude. I also wish to express my great indebtedness to the Humanistic Foundation, whose grants have enabled the publication of the present volume.

Uppsala, January 1957.

Sture Lagercrantz

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CHAPTER I

Childhood

When the wife expects a child, both she and all her relations are filled with joy, for children are the best and most longed-for thing a kanda can get. If she should not be with child, uneasiness and sorrow are felt, and certain measures or practical steps must be taken. The natives address themselves first to a nganga and to his nkisi, e.g. Londa, who gives fertility, or Nkondi, who releases embryos. One cause of a child's not being born may be a ndoki or one of the ancestors, who "binds" the pregnancy because he (she) has not been revered and has not received his (her) gifts as tradition requires. Sometimes the wife may be left for a while with some member of the husband's kanda who has proved very fertile. If the woman still does not become pregnant, she is called sita, sita kya nkaazu (a cola-nut tree which does not bear fruit), or she is considered to have a nkunda-hindrance (i.e. allusion is made to the light down on the rump of a hen, which is said to hinder laying). The childless woman is railed at.

If the husband lets his brother beget children, this is done secretly and he pays a hen as a fee. It may also happen that in the hope of getting children the wife has herself sent to several men, until she tires of this and resolves to stay with her husband, whom she loves. If a wife has given birth to children in an earlier but not in a later marriage, the later husband is called sita kya nkaazu.

No ceremonies are performed before the birth, as long as everything is going as it should. But if the embryo becomes restless, the mother ill, or if a miscarriage is feared, she is treated with nkisi by a nganga. She is then told to abstain from certain food and is also forbidden to do certain work.

Further, she should be protected from certain spirits. Thus she wears a little bell to warn the simbi-spirits, so that they may disappear from the path she is taking, as otherwise the embryo would not be fully developed, but would, for example, have crooked legs or be dumb. Among the nkisi who want to maim the embryo may be noted Nakongo and Funza.

The wife is often uneasy before the birth, and certain difficulties may arise at her confinement if she develops a craving for one thing or another. She may, for example, fear that she will die during her delivery, and confesses to whoredom etc. if she has been

guilty of anything of the kind, for this renders the birth more difficult and may even prevent it altogether. If the pregnancy is painful and the embryo wants to depart certain nkisi are invoked, e.g. Nona kya lusonginya (who holds fast like a warrior migratory ant). The woman may also place a warrior migratory ant on herself as a help.

An expecting mother should not do certain heavier types of work and must abstain from anything that is considered to affect adversely the well-being of the embryo or cause a miscarriage. If, for example, the woman has been treated by a water-nkisi, she may not take up manioc that has been set to soak in water, or anything else that has to do with water. Nor may she fetch water on nsona and nkandu days.¹

The man may have intercourse with his wife, as long as this does not happen too frequently. "Nor is it good to abstain, for then the pregnancy will not be firm, steady." But if the wife has had children that have died in the course of time, the husband must abstain from all intercourse with her, so that the children shall not die in the sequel, until nganga Lunama (who holds firm) or some nkisi has allowed them once more to take possession of their bed.

If the wife has been forbidden to eat e.g. ntooba-stew, water-soaked manioc, peas, tiba-bananas or pork, she may be given permission once more to eat the item in question by the same nganga as formerly forbade this. He says: "One, two, now the prohibition is at an end", and pretends to give her to eat of that which had been forbidden. He says: "One, two, now the prohibition is at an end" a second and a third time, and the prohibition is herewith suspended.

When the child is about to be born all women rejoice. If the labour pains come on suddenly the delivery may take place anywhere. The woman herself prefers to give birth outside her house, and she supports herself against the post behind it, for she does not wish to have a mess in the house and anger her husband, who may exact a big conciliatory gift if the child is born indoors. In cases of difficult and prolonged confinements, however, the child may be born indoors during the rainy season. A woman is very reluctant to give birth unless a number of persons have assembled, to help her to make as much commotion as possible, to get her to stand the pains and give birth to the child as soon as may be. If the pregnant woman is strong and a good child-bearer, she tries to abstain from screaming and calling out, and she may even give birth to the child alone to avoid a gathering of people. Such an action is much praised.

It sometimes happens that the child is born in the mother's or the maternal grandmother's house in her village. When a woman approaching her first confinement feels the throes of labour beginning, the women say to her: "When you feel ta yala, ta yala (pains that spread out), have patience, you goose. Don't utter shrieks on account of your torment. Go out and walk on the village road, then the pains will become greater and you can give birth powerfully. Don't begin straining too early, for you know how things went with So-and-so. If you begin, then keep it up to the end. Don't let the straining go snorting out through the nose, but out with the child!"

¹ Nsona and nkandu are the names of the forth and first days in the four-day market-week in the Congo.

Those who assist at the birth are older female relatives, experienced old women. In more difficult cases other women may be summoned, the men, too, and the banganga who have treated her earlier. Sometimes the woman in child-bed is treated very threateningly and insultingly.

When a nganga has been summoned he asks whether the woman giving birth or her husband have not been guilty of fornication. The culprit must then confess this to the other and the child will now be born. Many secret sins are revealed in this way, and the custom is still practised. If there is no such confession to be made and the confinement is nevertheless protracted, threats and even violence are resorted to. In this case the woman is said to be afraid of giving birth and wants to get rid of the child, and the husband and others therefore frighten her in many ways. The husband clamours and shouts grimly, whets his knife on the ground to cut a coil of rope and go and hang himself in wrath and sorrow. The chief of the village also makes a hullabaloo. The woman's brothers and others may also come and express their wrath in many ways. They may frighten her with guns, cover her eyes, threaten to choke her in the belief that through fear she may get the courage and the force to give birth.

If despite all this she does not start expelling the child with force, and the child's head begins to appear, but vanishes again, then her female assistants commence to rail at her terribly, and twist her ears and nose, so that the strainings necessarily become forceful. Sometimes the pregnant woman is not allowed to enter the house, in spite of the chill of the night. The assistants tear off her rags of clothing instead, rail at her and say: "Why should you be tormented like this unnecessarily? Listen, how the water rushes forward. See, his head is pointed like a banana-flower. The ears are projecting and as big as the top of a mushroom. The eyes are protruding like the eyes of a hanged goat. Are you going to let another's child perish? I think that you, too, have been excreted (nenwa), eh? Well, how is it? Say, is there no difficulty in giving birth? Take your excrement, then, that you are expelling and make it into a child." They may also say: "Eh, squeeze strongly this spook! Eh, squeeze strongly this corpse. The fold of the neck is left. Eh, strain hard, or are you going to be rid of the child?" and so forth.

Sometimes the husband of the woman sacrifices a hen and invokes Nakongo, Makwende or some other nkisi to drive away the spirits and bandoki that are preventing the delivery. The nganga may also assist by giving medicine to the woman. If the birth is proceeding passably, they must sing by way of encouragement: "Eh, hold fast (takalala). Eh, hold fast surely. Eh, only keep it up. Eh, only strain. Eh, strain. Eh, separate (baasa). Eh, split in two." After a short time: "Eh, the neck-ring. Eh, the neck." If it is a boy they cry: "Eh, a male nganga, his mother's glory." If it is a girl, they are quite silent. They say merely: "A big child, she was almost unable to give birth to it."

If the child could not issue of itself, it sometimes happened that there was one present who could take it by the head, when the latter appeared, and pull gently, in-

deed, even introduce her hands and grasp the child by the shoulders and pull it forth. But as a rule they would only sit and watch. "What was there to be done?" Sometimes the women stretch out their hands as if to receive the child, but it does not come. They may turn the woman upside down with her head towards the ground, but none ventures to intervene by catching hold of the child, turning it or pulling it, for they believe that in this way the child would be killed.

The woman in labour adopts a squatting position or bends forward in another woman's lap. But they try to make her take up another position, even, in some cases, by taking a lukamba climbing loop and letting her hang bending down, sometimes bracing her legs against her husband or against the post in the house or elsewhere. She may not turn to the right or the left, nor may she lie doubled up, or quite straight. She must not talk, for then those present say: "Don't be talkative, stick to your job of giving birth. Shall I twist your mouth for you?"

If the woman gave birth to an undeveloped embryo or had a miscarriage she had to be treated with nkisi Nsulu a nkombo lest the same misfortune should happen again. If a woman wants to have a miscarriage she must drink hot water, eat eal's fins, green pineapple, manioc soaked in water, sadi-potatoes, and she must squeeze and massage her belly. If the pregnancy comes prematurely to an end the husband and his brothers-in-law feel great sorrow, for by way of amends they must pay a goat or a pig to ngwa toko (the husband's mother or her kanda).

If the child dies at the birth this is called bwela mwana (to squeeze the child to death), which is said to have taken place when the nasal cartilage of the infant is squashed. In such cases the mother is dreadfully abused and no one wants to help her. The father of the child is tried and he must pay a fine of a goat or a pig. The result may also be divorce. No one has any sympathy for the woman or is willing to fetch water for her to have a bath. No one visits her. Her food is cooked by the mother, the father or a sister. These are the only ones who can help the woman in this situation. If the husband gives her a little pisang it is as a favour, but she never gets pork or other meat. And of course the husband does not give her pisang unless he is very fond of her. A miscarriage might also be due to the fact that the mother urinated in the water when she was a child, so that mabuta (the birth) has, as they say, gone to water for ngola-fishes, tadpoles and simbi-spirits. Similarly, bandoki or minkisi might be the cause of the miscarriage.

A woman who has given birth to a child stays for a while in the house without working, and only eats. If she has someone helping her the latter may stay for as long as four weeks. She washes the mother and the child, fetches water and wood, prepares the food and looks after them to the best of her ability. If the mother is an orphan she may keep still for only four or five days. Others take things easy until the child's navel is hidden; only then are they ready to go and fetch water.

Many customs are observed after a child's birth. A maize-leaf, for instance, is tied to the roof, and if the child should sneeze the mother must shake the leaf. It is left there

until the child has begun to walk. When the mother bathes the child in the home she must first pour out some water beside the child and then bathe it. When the mother goes out with the child on her hip and meets someone on the path she must stop and stand still in the middle of the path until the person has gone past. This is one of the rules of custom. When the mother goes out to her plot in the fields she may not put her child in the shade of e.g. a nlolo-tree, but only in the shade of mwindu-tree. If she wants to give the child a bath out in the fields, the water must be poured from a dark nkalu-pitcher.

Both the mother and the child are consecrated with fowl, a boy with a rooster, a girl with a hen. In this connection a branch of nsanda rubber-tree (a mvila-tree) must be cut off and thrust into the earth in front of the parents' house. Palm-leaves are then attached to the branch. When the mother washes the child with nkula-red she must also smear some on the fowl. A stranger may not enter a house consecrated in this way. If he must go there, the owner of the house must take the munsanga lavu-plant and let him touch it and then lead him to the door.

The sleeping place is also consecrated. No one may sit there. If the child has been sanctified the husband and the wife may not sit on the same bed until the child is two, two and a half or three years old. The paramount nganga must first give them permission to sit on the same bed. The child is consecrated also in the following way. The placenta is buried by a nganga, after which an offset of ndongila-bananas, lemba-lemba and lusaku-saku are laid on the placenta in the order mentioned. Lastly, the child is laid on top. When the nganga has done this the mother may not take wood out of the house on konzo and mpika days,¹ nor may she do so at night. When the child's skin has begun to get dusky it is borne in a carrying band and is allowed to accompany the mother to the fields, and fire may be taken out of the house.

When a woman has given birth to a child out of doors she may go into the house and seat herself on a banana-leaf on account of the bleeding. But she is first given a drink with pepper that she must quaff while standing, so that the blood will not thicken. Then a nimble fellow puts on water for a bath. There is some dancing and running before he puts the water on the fire outside the house. A quick person is chosen so that the child shall soon be able to walk. In the cauldron in which the child is bathed are put portions of animals that jump about and are strong, e.g. the ngondo or nkewa apes, chimpanzees and the like, so that the child shall have the same strength and liveliness as these beasts. Into the pot where the mother has her bath are put fresh palm-nuts, so that she may bathe among these and wipe her body with them while the water is hot.

A woman who has given birth to a child is not considered to be unclean, but she may not prepare food just after the birth. For a time she must wash herself carefully with water and sweet-smelling red pomade. Men with several wives do not eat food prepared by the latest mother until the child has begun to walk. When she is to begin to prepare

¹ Konzo and mpika are two of the days in the four-day market-week of the Kongo. Mpika is a synonym for nsona. Konzo is the second day.

food for her husband she must first kill a hen for him as he has not eaten food prepared by her for a long time.

The father has to see that the mother gets what she needs in the way of food during the period when she is sitting still at home. The father and mother are glad if a boy has been born to them, though they are also glad for a girl. But the mother's kanda is gladdest if the child is a girl, who can keep the kanda in power. But if there are many girls this is not good, for in this case the kanda will become divided in the future.

If the father and mother get only boys, though they have wanted a change, they take the wooden crosspiece from the side of the bed facing the fire and exchange it for the crosspiece on the other side. They will then get both girls and boys. If they get only girls, they exchange the crosspieces in the contrary way. They do the same in connection with the birth of twins. If boys are born the first time they wish for girls the next time. If the mother and her child do not become ill no action is taken by the banganga until it is to be taken out of the house and named.

What is prescribed by tradition is very carefully observed by both father and mother for the child's sake. They also see to it that the house in which there is a new-born baby is not desecrated. Thus, for example, no one who has eaten goat's meat or been holding a goat with a rope may enter. One who has eaten sela-rat or touched this animal may not touch the child or enter the house, and the same applies to anyone who has eaten fish with sharp spines or fins that prick, e.g. nkanka, nsinsi, nkooko and mpudi. Some nkisi allow certain easings to restrictions for those who have eaten or touched something forbidden. If one merely washes with lwangu-lwangu leaves the prohibition is suspended and one is allowed to enter the house and touch the child.

When the mother is to be purified she is taken by a nganga to the water and is placed in the middle of it. All clothes and wrappings are removed. All hair is shaved from the head, the armpits, the genitals and elsewhere and dropped into the water so that it is carried away. In this way also the child's mortality is to be carried far away. All this is performed by a female or male nganga. The fathers are not purified.

When a man has begotten (buta) for the first or second time he must be consecrated to nkisi Lumoni. He may then not eat the forbidden animals (e.g. chicken, guinea-fowl, partridges, mfwenge, mbaku etc.) with those who are not consecrated to Lumoni. A pregnant woman, and especially one who has already given birth, bathes her body with palm-oil and red pomade. To her carrying band she attaches a little bell or dog-bell and, frequently, an amulet.

After their birth all children except twins are as a rule treated in the same way. In Bwende, certainly, the birth of twins is the occasion of much gladness and festivity; but much care and great caution must be observed lest they be "offended" and die. If one child has appeared and another is still expected there is a loud clamouring: "Yoyo-yoyo, our twins, yoyo-yoyo, our twins." Everybody dances wildly. The whole village dances throughout the night. Those who fetch water for the mother to bathe in have to go twice for the sake of the twins. A father of twins (ngudi a nsimba) declares:

"When I, NDIBU, got home one day from tapping palm-wine and was about to enter the house as usual I was prevented by some people who were sitting on the green-sward. They said: Eh, father, you mustn't go in so quickly. Your wife has given birth to twins, a girl and a boy. You must first dance masamba towards the twins in the house to honour them, and say: Our nsimba-twin (the first born), what a joy. Our nzuzi-twin (the second), what a joy. With this song you must appear to the twins in the house. Whoever wishes to go in must first dance masamba."

"I did this and went into the house and was exceedingly glad to see the little ones. Then the people said: You must send for Funza's nganga, that he may come and bless the twins. He came. I gave him a mat to sit on. He said: You and your wife, take a mat and the two twins and sit down here in the yard. Then he said to the people: Take ash from the hearth, where yuuma is prepared, manure from the pigs and rubbish from the garbage-pile and bring it here. Then he sang: Funza does not eat masoko-stew, sokaeneno (play with each other), he fosters, he gives. Then the villagers went on singing, while the nganga prepared medicine. They sang, and now he said: Lift up the ash and the rubbish. Cover the children's clothes, and bend down, both of you. So then they flung the ash, the dung and the rubbish over us till we were quite grey. In this way we were blessed. Then we had to get up and go into the house. The nganga was given food, he ate and drank. Now he took a leaf from a top shoot of a palm, together with medicine, cut off the leaf and said: Take a ntumbu calabash and a cricket (nzenze) and give them to me. He then put the cricket and the medicine into the calabash. To the mother he gave other medicine to put in her mouth, blessed the palm-leaf, squeezed out spittle and medicine in the calabash and blessed her. She was to say: I am the mother of nzuzi, I am the mother of nsimba, I gave birth to nsimba, I gave birth to nzuzi nasekidi (lively). I am healthy, brisk and light as the nzenze-cricket, as the mpaasi mpongo-grasshopper that chiefs like."

Then the nganga took the top-shoot leaf from the palm and cut it in two. The one half was hung up at the house-door on the front-gable end and the other on the back-gable end of the house. Now the nganga received his fee: four mugs of gunpowder, peanuts, beans, bananas and a nkwal-mat. Afterwards he said to me: "Take a musanzu-banana (that has been pulled up) that we shall share among the banganga and bankimba (laymen)." And he said: "These little children you must not discourage (sakula). If anyone wants to lull them or hold them he must first give them a present, small mbwela-beads, peanuts, beans or something else. You, NDIBU, and your wife must not squabble or be angry with each other. And you, wife, when you begin to go out with the children, for example to the fields, if you come to a fork in the path take the rattle in your hand and rattle with it and dance masamba and cry: I am ngudi a nsimba, ngudi a nzuzi (mother of twins). I have given birth to nsimba, I have given birth to nzuzi, I have multiplied like the cricket, like the mpaasi-grasshopper. Whichever fork you intend to take, rattle with the rattle and dance masamba."

The parents and the twins are considered sacred as bakisi. The father (ngudi a

nsimba) has more magic power than the banganga, and he is accordingly sent for when some nkisi is to be made up. He must then come to prepare and bless the first medicine. No one, as a matter of fact, may complete a nkisi until a ngudi a nsimba has been present. He must on such occasions also cut in two the leaf from the top-shoot of the palm as described above.

Among the children albinos (bandundu) occupy a special position, for they are considered to have been born through simbi-spirits. An albino relates the following: "When my mother became pregnant she went to the water together with others to look for fish under stones. When she was about to take a fish she got caught under a stone. No one pulled her free until a nganga came and threw a pinch of earth and pulled her. She rose up in ecstasy, and this lasted until she got home. She did not become stronger until she had given birth to me. The nganga said to her: You must not eat bananas growing in pairs. You must not cross over a watercourse on a nkenge-day until you have broken off a water-plant and thrown it in the water.¹ You must not eat the brisket or ears of pig." Of her father, the same albino said: "When my father went to the water to catch fish and dived he got hold of a simbi-being, which he was unable to lift—they are said to belong to nkisi Nakongo. He thought it was a fish. He let it go, climbed up on the bank and was trembling from head to foot all the way home. He was ill and unable to eat. Father's younger brothers (baleeke) went to fetch nganga Ntadi (the smeller out). The latter said: You must be treated with Nakongo, for you have gone and taken bakisi with you, so your wife will give birth to a wonderful child. Like mother, he did not regain his strength until I was born. Nganga Nakongo lifted me up and gave me the names MADIISU (eyes) and NDUNDU (albino). The same prohibitions then applied for my father as for mother. The stream in which my father dived is at Wunganga and that where mother got caught is called Kinkindu. If anyone goes into ecstasy I immediately throw a pinch of dust on his body, spit on his heart (ntima) and the crown of his head. But this must be done in the middle of a nganga's yard."

Another, female, albino declares that her mother became pregnant when she went to fetch water and saw something resembling Nakongo's necklace (nsanga) whirling round on the surface of the water. She then became feeble in her body until the child was born. This feebleness and sickness must not be confused with any other illness. This person said further that she could not see very well at a distance when the sun was shining clearly. At night, on the other hand, her sight was quite good, for her eyes were different from those of other black people. Sometimes, however, she suffered from headaches and fell ill like other black people.

Albinos are considered to be bakisi, and for this reason the natives always want some of the hair of their heads when making a nkisi. Albino hair is therefore publicly sold for this purpose.

All sorts of anomalies occur in the new-born; they are as a rule ascribed to Funza and other bakisi, and the mother must therefore be treated with these bakisi. She must

¹ Nkenge is the third day in the four-day market week of the Kongo.

then undergo a prescribed treatment and take a medicine, otherwise she would give birth to another such child. A child without understanding is sometimes thought to have been begotten during the stillness of the midnight hour (*ndingu a nsi*), when everything is still, including the understanding. The man who then cohabits with his wife is therefore looked upon as a fool. As the reason why some children are without any force, it is sometimes alleged that the father was fuddled with palm-wine when he slept with his wife. Other blemishes arise if the mother is frightened during the pregnancy; or she has perhaps been struck on the limb that is deformed in the child.

To wake up a sleeping woman who is pregnant is forbidden, for the gods (*zinzambi*) are at work shaping the child while she sleeps. If she is woken up and starts, a finger may sprout from the side, the neck or elsewhere. If a child is born with a squint, someone is believed to have moved a firebrand behind the mother's back while the child was looking. In the case of a child born with six fingers the extra finger is cut off. Birth-defects referring to the anus or the genitals (*ntuka vumu*) are often treated as follows: morning after morning the father and mother lick the child on the spot where the defect appears so that it may become normal.

When a woman has given birth to a child she may not give it the breast directly, as the first milk is considered to be very bad. It is red, sour and bad for the child's stomach. The baby's evacuation, for example, might be stopped. A woman with an infant should give it the breast four to six times daily. The child is fed at the breast also at night. Sometimes the child is suckled for one or two years. If the mother becomes pregnant, the child tires of the breast, for then the milk turns sour, or else stops altogether. Anyone at all may suckle a child, but in case of need it is the duty of the *kanda*, i.e. the sisters or the sisters-in-law, to help. If another free-born woman than the mother gives the child the breast the first few times she gets a fee in the form of meat, bananas, palm-wine, salt, tobacco or something of the kind.

If the milk does not come soon, the mother must be treated with various *nkisi*. *Sa bidiilu*, for example, is a powerful medicine of this kind. One pounds up and mixes *nzeke-nzeke*, *dinsanga*, the *nkabi* plant, *buba-buba* and a creeper from which, when it is cut, there oozes a copious sap. Before the mother takes the medicine it must also be dripped on her breasts, so that the milk may soon dissolve and begin to ooze. The mother must also drink *mwenge* palm-wine, eat salt, pepper and things that taste good. If the mother of a new-born child dies, another *nkisi* is used which may cause milk to flow in any woman at all. If a mother has left her child and it begins to cry, she feels her breasts and the milk then flows into them.

Twins must be fostered very carefully. As a rule, twins are blessed with so-called water-*nkisi*, such as e.g. *Mayiza*, *Nakongo*, *Manzanza* and *Londa*, when they are two months old. Before this they may not be taken out of the home and may not see either sun or moon. When twins are to eat the food must be apportioned exactly alike and be given to both at the same time. If the one should get food before the other, the latter may be offended, hang its head and die. If this rule is not observed, the mother, or the

person who is feeding the twins, must immediately clap her hands reverently before the twins and say: "I greet you with reverence, do not go away, do not be enraged, I shall not do it again another day." If a present is given to the one twin the other must receive a similar gift, otherwise he hangs his head, falls ill and dies. There is a proverb which says: "If you give to the first (nsimba), give also to the second (nzuzi)." Anyone intending to give the mother a present therefore duplicates this, giving her e.g. two leaves of tobacco, two cola-nuts, two bunches of bananas or whatever it may be. The twins must be lulled at the same time, and the natives say: "If you're going to criticize the one, criticize also the other. If you strike the one, strike also the other. If you refuse one, refuse the other at the same time." All visitors must first dance masamba outside the hut where the twins live, by throwing up with the leg the corner of the loin-cloth and at the entrance stretching out both hands towards the mother. Then the twins have gratefully received the greeting.

When the mother sleeps together with them she must lie on her back between them, for whom should she turn her back on and offend? When she carries them, she must carry the one on the right side and the other on the left. The parents may never quarrel or be dissatisfied in sight or hearing of the children. If the mother is sorry she got twins on account of the extra work and has no female relative to help her, the twins fall ill and die, for she does not love them. If one of the twins should die, a wooden sculpture or something of the sort (a "doll twin") and a medicine must be procured. This is tied to the surviving twin, and he is told: "Don't hang your head, here is your twin brother." The sculpture should be made by a nganga who knows Bunzi, Funza, Kilondo or Masekula, since one of these nkisi collaborates in the shaping of the child in the womb. When the surviving twin is to eat or drink, the doll twin must also be given food and drink. Dead twins are always buried at a crossroads, so that all who pass may throw a plucked leaf on the grave and kick up the corner of the loin cloth with a leg in order to honour the dead (tuba lusambu). If it is a girl, a little basket is put on the grave and lembe-lembe and a pisang shoot are planted (fig. 1 b/c).

The naming and first public showing of a child is often quite a circumstantial business, as several banganga are summoned, in the first place, of course, those who have in any way taken part in the treatment during the pregnancy or in connection with the child's birth. When the time for this is approaching, the father begins the preparations by getting in the necessary quantities of palm-wine, small fishes, bunches of bananas, plenty of cassava and yuuma. As much as thirty calabashes of palm-wine and fifty pots of yuuma may be required, and as many as eight to ten banganga may take part.

The first guests to arrive are given palm-wine and commence the ceremonies. A nganga sends for a mpidi-basket belonging to the mother and begins to carve a medicine with which the child is to be treated. The home, the mother and the mpidi-basket must first be protected by magic from all mischief that bandoki, minkisi and malevolent persons may conceivably cause. This is done on the second day of the feast. A nganga says: "Eh, male ndoki, female ndoki? No, no ndoki, but someone with evil magic. They

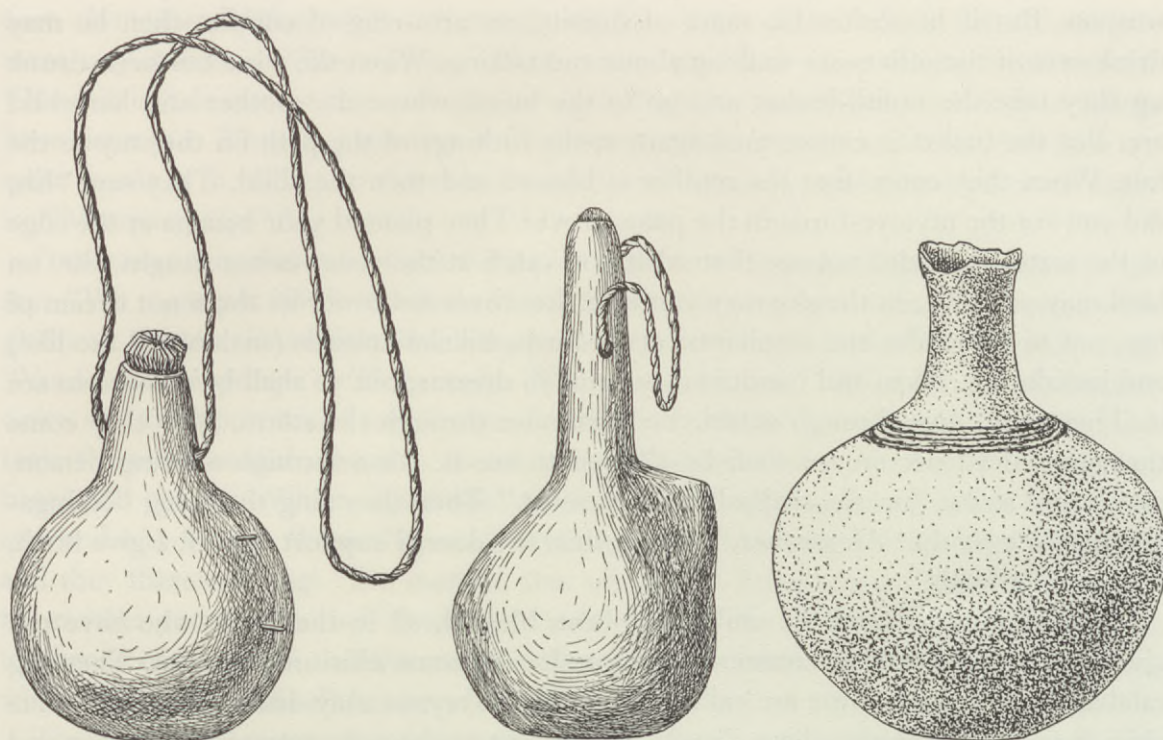


Fig. 1. A, Nkisi Mbumba (a tutu-calabash), Sundi (Laman 571). B, Consecrated calabash for nkisi Funza, Sundi in Mayombe (Laman 1259). C, Nkisi Bunzi (a clay-pot), Sundi in Mayombe (Laman 555).

come by two roads. They want to bewitch the child, who is beautiful. They want to trample it, bewitch it, so that it may become thin and die. Or perhaps they will first throw something on the child, so that it gets stomach-ache. You, mister Nkongo, do not be indulgent, strike in the water, strike on the land." For each medicine that is carved the nganga repeats what it is supposed to do. Those who carry out the work protect themselves by singing their nkisi songs.

Now the mpidi-basket must be protected and blessed. Here and there they draw a sort of sign of the cross on it with chalk and yellow ochre, and they also draw a chalk ring around the basket. Inside, too, and in the corners in the bottom are drawn ovals and rings. If the banganga are too lazy to do this the work may be performed by anyone at all. The one who does it takes medicine and fresh palm-wine in his mouth; this is to be spat on and into the basket with cries uttered kimpati and kinganga-wise:¹ "May she carry the basket with health, may she carry it with gladness, ka twavwa nsanga, ka twavwa nkuku ko."² He may also say: "May she put on her mpidi-basket, put it on with health, put it on with gladness." All banganga must do this three times.

After this they pray for palm-wine in various ways, according to the rules of their nkisi. When Bunzi's nganga is drinking, for example, no one may speak or hold a

¹ Both kimpati and kinganga signify the capacity for or gift of initiating minkisi.

² "Have no evil for us, no evil intent."

weapon. But if he shakes his mark of dignity, an arm-ring of copper, then he may drink even if the others are walking about and talking. When the wine has been drunk up they take the mpidi-basket and go to the house where the mother and her child are. But the basket is consecrated again at the forkings of the path on the way to the hut. When they enter, first the mother is blessed and then the child. They say: "Eh, did you see the ntyetye-birds in the palm-grove? They planted your banana at the edge of the water. You did not see that what you catch at the water is not caught. Sir, on land may you take, in the sky may you take. Let them not broil, let them not dream of fire, not of crocodiles and elephants, ntoya-birds, bikoka-animals (snakes and the like) and jackals, Sir. Nkisi and bandoki may come in dreams, but ye shall be allowed to see it. They may come through storm. Ye travel also through the storm. May they come through a dead person, ye shall be allowed to see it. Ah-a through a living person, ravish and strike, Sir. Ye shall all be successful." Then they sing the song: "Nsingamanga mu kyavulu.¹ Ah mother, I lean against the door, I support myself, I give birth, it is coming forth."

When the mother and the child have been blessed, all in the house who have not given birth to children or consecrated themselves to some nkisi must go out. Then big calabashes with palm-wine are called for, so that everyone may drink according to his nkisi-formula. When they have drunk, they go out to show the way to the mother and her child and to pick up all kinds of leaves. The mother has put the child in the carrying band and the basket with mattock, mbangu-dish, calabash, spoon, bananas, manioc and basket plates on her back. They then take a hooked branch (lungoya) and pull the mother's little finger with it and say: "One, two, mankandikila kya" (to get out). This is said three times, and then they are taken just outside, while the mother holds on to the hook and a nganga to the handle. Two other banganga now do likewise, holding each other. Sometimes they smear also the child with chalk and yellow ochre on legs, arms, knees and in the face.

When they get outside they begin to pick leaves from whatever plants they find and go to a stream over which they are to take the mother and the child. On the bank they invoke Bunzi, Manzanza and Nakongo with about the same words as were pronounced when the mother and the child were led out of the house, and continue: "However they may come, bandoki, bisimbi and bakisi, may your eyes be clear-sighted (kye-kye-kye)." Or: "May you make the crossing with health, may you cross over with gladness. One, two, mankandikila kya." This is thrice repeated, and they cross over. But they return to the home still with a finger on the hook, singing: "Show me, guide."

When they arrive at the home again they walk round it and dance with the woman, rubbing her breasts. Others also come to dance. They sing: "They come laughing (nankye-nkye). Malonda, I have not done anything. Eh, I do not love wizardry, I love a nganga Malonde-e." Another song runs as follows: "Wipe away the grease of grief. Malonda, show me glory, and I shall look, revered Wamba (a nganga), eh, the chalk

¹ "I lean against the door."

first, eh mother." When all have danced with the mother, palm-wine is called for in the same way as before. They call for it three times, and three times they get the answer: "Here it is." It is now the turn of the mpidi-basket, into which a number of things have been put. They request that it be placed on the ground, and everyone uses the same words as in calling for the palm-wine, e.g.: "Ndombolo santu",¹ to which the reply is: "Maama zyezye".²

Once more they dance, and put the mpidi-basket on the ground again. The banganga say: "We must put down the basket with health, we must put down the basket with gladness. Listen, listen intently, may your eyes be clear-sighted." Then they sing: "Vuula nsala mpongo."³ They reply: "Eh, it is taken off." They all put the basket down and fall upon it and snatch away (sanza) everything to be found there, the mattock, the mbooba-dish, the pan, the carrying band, the basket, the bunch of bananas, beans and peas etc. Whoever has been quick enough to grab anything is now the owner of it and may keep it. When they vuula nsala mpongo they may first take away the wind, and they therefore sing: "Eh, mother, that whirlwind, bring it here." All stand round the mother and stretch their hands skywards, whence the wind comes, and place it on the heads of the child and the mother. One after the other "takes" and "places" the wind in this way until all have performed the ceremony.

They now sit down to consecrate the child. They take a piece of lubongo-cloth and place the child upon it, smearing chalk and yellow ochre on its arm where the arm-ring is to be, on its joints, forehead and back etc. Then they start singing: "Eh ngangula yombo (smith), you have been consecrated, you have been blessed, ngangula yombo."

They lift up the child from the lubongo-cloth and consider that the cloth is like the leopard-skin upon which a regent is crowned, and that the child will now be well. While the child is still on the piece of cloth it is to be given its name. They hold the little finger of one of the child's hands and say to the people: "Do you know the name of it?"—"No."—"Do you know its name?"—"No."—"Do you know the name of it?"—"No."—"We have given it the name of NKANZA."—"No, oh no."—"Do you know the name of it?" (Questions and answers are repeated thrice.)—"No."—"We have given it the name of MASAMBA."—"Yes, just so. It is he, MASAMBA, who has cleared (samba) the way." After this each nganga must sew a little futu-bag of cotton and put into it a medicine that he has carved. From eight to twenty such bags may be tied to the child's body, to prevent its being bewitched.

Among the regulations that must be observed may be noted the following. One who has eaten goat's meat or forbidden fish may not enter the house. The mother may not eat tiba-bananas, the topmost bananas in a bunch or binsakulu-tomatoes together with others; nor may she eat manioc that has been taken out of water the same day.

¹ "A prayer brother namesake."

² "Here is a little palm-wine."

³ "Take the plumes off the bird of paradise," i.e. also off the banganga.

If anyone wants to take the child the mother must first put it down on the ground. She may not hand it into another person's arms, for the person might be a *ndoki*. If she is on the road with the child and a storm comes, she must take the wind and lay it on the child's head, for sometimes there may come evil things that sting and bite, *bakisi* or *bandoki*, indeed, even *banganga*.

When the child is given a name, the whole *kanda* often help. The old ones prefer to name the child after someone else, i.e. give *ndusi* (another's name). This sometimes took the form of one of the older ones coming and saying: "The foetus you are bearing you must call after me. If it is a girl, let her be named after my mother or wife." If it is a girl, the two women have to fight it out about the *ndusi*-name. Others wait until the child is born, until the women are heard to cry in chorus: "Ah ho, a male *nganga*, his mother's glory." If at this juncture someone comes up and says: "I am there!" then this is the person that the child shall have as a namesake. But there may be a dispute, for the father and the mother may have different opinions. However, after a dispute about many names the one chosen is frequently the one that was first mentioned.

The first thing that the child's namesake is to bring is the *nsansulu*-pot to bath in. He must then give food to the mother, in whose womb his namesake has been. He may then take with him perhaps six to ten skewers of grilled fish, two to three bunches of bananas, salt, tobacco etc. Also a rug or cloth may serve. If the person in question is rich he may give the mother a good garment of *tambala*-cloth and items of clothing also for the father. The child must have, *inter alia*, a shirt, soap and cloth and a little cap.

If a child has died the mother may give it a strange name that is not to be found in either the father's or the mother's *kanda*. This is called a *suma*-name, and is, accordingly, a name that has been given for a certain reason. When a long time has elapsed and the child can run, they must take it to its namesake. On this occasion four, five or six pots of *yuuma* and chicken, big skewers of smoked *ntondya*-fish and a goat and the goat's rope, i.e. a hen, are prepared. All this is to be set before the man and his namesake.

When they arrive at the village they are invited to sit down on papyrus mats on which baskets of sugar-cane and palm-wine have been set. They drink. A spokesman (*nzonzi*) for the visitors greets the village's spokesman with a clapping of hands and begins to give an account of why he has been appointed to come and speak on his friends' behalf, saying, amongst other things: "They have said to me: You must go tither, for our child has been given a name after a namesake, who is now to be given gifts. Tell him that we are grateful for everything, what we have formerly received in the way of smoked fish, salt, cola-nuts, tobacco, rows of bananas etc., therefore we come now with our pots of *yuuma*, this goat and this hen, which is the goat's rope. But then you should think of your brother (i.e. the child) and clothe him. You should also think of his father and mother, otherwise it is as the old said: Your shame is our shame."

Often the child is named after a deceased good relative, so that the latter's name

may not be effaced. Children may also be given a name after a nkisi, as for example NSONSI, NLOMBA, LONDA, MBANDA, MPUZANZA and so on. Sometimes they are named after a lawsuit or some other occurrence taking place at the time of their birth, or after some notorious person or one who has lived for a long time, so that also the child may live a long life. A number of names may be adduced. BASITA (barrenness), since the child is born after a long marriage. The mother exclaims: "Am I then sita (barren)? See, here is the child!" NKADI, NDUDI, NASOKOLO, MBI and NABAKANGA (all = bitter). The mother has given birth to several children, who have all died, as bakisi and bandoki have eaten them. She then gives the new child a "bitter" name, so that they may not feel inclined to eat this one too.

BALANGIDILA, wait, look, spy at, which implies that the men shall come and follow her with their glances when she has attained marriageable age. NSONA, after the day on which the child was born. This day is a lucky day, and those born then will get many possessions. Whatever they undertake will succeed. "NSONA wasonamana byo."¹ KONZO and NKENGGE, the names of market days, which are often given if on her way to or from the market the mother has her labour pains. NKENGGE is also a good name, for "NKENGGE ma kengana ye bandoki ye bankwa mpandu au."² Lungu, pain, suffering, sorrow and distress, is a name that the mother gives to the child if she has suffered much in her marriage. KYABELWA, the hated one, is what the child is called if the father is spiteful and quarrels much. Twins are called NSIMBA and NZUZI, and an albino NDUNDU. If anyone should be given one of these names without being a twin or an albino, he is a "namesake".

LUKOMBO, swept clean or washed, is the name given to one born after twins, for the twin birth has then disappeared. NLANDU, who follows after, is another name for the child following the birth of twins. NZIBA, closed, has not a normal vagina. This is what she is sneeringly called by young men, as she does not accept their offers of marriage or company. When she is married and has had a child she calls it NZIBA, saying: "Have I had the birth-defect nziba?" TUKEBANA, we preserve mutual peace, is the name given to a girl who is to replace quarrelling and conflicts with peace, quiet and joy. Both young and old persons frequently change their name according to their feats, their mood or understanding, wisdom for which they wish to be known and honoured.

Among the names given to various types of birth (mabuta) may be noted the following: Masemuka (the first birth), masukila ma mooyo (the womb's last birth), lubutu lwa kinzau (birth of large children like the elephant), lubutu lwa kinsunini (birth of small children like the bird nsunini), and lubutu lwa kyomba (birth like the bunch of palm-nuts, which comes after many years' longing and seeking). The births must not come too frequently, for then the kanda is weakened. If a first-born child soon dies it must not be buried far away, but behind the house, so that the fertility which has "begun" shall not be checked.

¹ "This has been ascribed to NSONA."

² That is bandoki and other wizards pay attention to one another's tricks and arts, and then NKENGGE goes free.

If one child after another dies, a nganga is summoned to give the mother a futu-medicine to wear and to help her with his nkisi. The next time she is pregnant the nganga decides on what nsona-days she must not work. On these days she may only pulverize tukulu-red with which she rubs her body. Among the prohibitions she must observe may be noted the following. She may not lull a boy, touch a hoe, a bush-knife, a food-slice or climbing loop. The yuuma she is to eat may not be tasted when she is facing the fire. When the nsona-days have come to an end, nearly all the prohibitions are removed, and the futu-medicine is to be succeeded by the child. The prohibitions vary with different nkisi. One, for example, may allow the woman to cut and prepare food. Some collect the prohibitions in the futu-medicine or carve a medicine which they place in a tutu-calabash. In this case the man may sleep with his wife right up to the time of her delivery.

If the mother died before her infant and there was no close relative who was willing to suckle the child, the latter would often be laid in the same grave as the mother. If an unmarried person was requested to give the child food, e.g. sweet palm-wine, with which children are often nurtured with the addition of other suitable food, the request was frequently refused on account of fear of the child's excrement and urine. Many who had small babies did not venture to give the breast to others' infants if their husbands were ill-tempered and malevolent. If the mother had eaten nkasa-poison the child was thrown into the fire, for then it was believed that the child had learned from its mother to eat people. Sometimes a thieving mother who had been caught red-handed was punished through her child being dashed on the ground. If it did not die, they thrust a knife in its chest or mouth. Children were sometimes also killed from pure spitefulness and jealousy.

Orphans and others who had not grown up normally, but had become very thin and wretched, were secretly disposed of, sometimes by some boy, who would be given some peanuts, meat or the like by the chief in return for digging a pit and flinging in the child on a suitable occasion. Such killings might also be performed publicly, especially if the child in question was afflicted with some malignant disease, such as, for example, leprosy. In this case it would be flung into a deep ravine. The lives of younger and older children, and above all slave children, were forfeit if in the course of their play with the children of the chief or of an influential man they inflicted any serious injury on the latter, e.g. the fracture of an arm or a leg. In this, as in many such cases, it was believed that they had sought to inflict this injury by wizardry.

It is the desire of all that their kanda should increase in number, power and wealth. For this reason it was in certain tracts formerly not uncommonly the case that free love was connived at if only it resulted in a virgin's becoming pregnant. Her brothers would say: "You have given birth to a child, this is the wedding-gift, the payment." They did not permit her to separate from the father of the child or to have sexual intercourse with other men, for in this way the marriage and the production of children might be jeopardized. Men who begot children and women who gave birth to them

were therefore much honoured and sought after. The chief reason why many children were desired was that it was considered to be a great honour and wealth for the kanda and for those who had become kin with them through the marriage. Through the growing children the ancestors receive, according to traditions still valid, a portion of the animals that are shot, of the palm-wine that is tapped and of the crops that are harvested. At weddings and on other festive occasions they all get their share of honour and gifts. Further, the children and the grandchildren see to it that their kanda is not exposed to calumny, usury or suffering of any kind. In times of illness the father, as well as the mother and

children, receives much help, and banganga are sent for and richly rewarded. The children watch over their relatives interests in various ways. Finally, the funeral, too, will be a day of honour, when all relatives come with their gifts for the shroud and for the feast.

A mother who has many children and numerous grandchildren is honoured like a great chief, indeed, even more. If a man has had no children with his wife, or only one or two, he may be honoured if he is energetic and industrious and is able to procure possessions for buying male and female slaves, who in their turn give birth to children and grandchildren, for they belong to him. One who does not get on, however, is reviled, despised and badly treated in several ways.

The population in the northern and central districts was in the period about 1890 exceedingly dense; farther south and towards the coast it had for several reasons already begun to diminish considerably. At that time Bwende was regarded as the most thickly populated tract, followed by Kindamba and Kinsundi. The villages higher up the country were large and everywhere numerous, as is sometimes also apparent from their names. Mukimpululu, for example, refers to a great crowd, which like the mpululu-bird comes in a flock of many hundreds. In Zunga and Nzengita there were swarms (zunga and zengita = swarm) of young men and women as well as old people and children of both sexes. At Yannga there was a great screaming (yama, yannga of children) and noise of its dense throngs. At that time the people used to hum and clamour and scream. When one went out on the village street it was like one big market.



Fig. 2. Nyombo, Sundi in Kingoyi (Laman 469).

The villages were composed of many hundreds of houses; in certain villages, however, each kanda formed larger, isolated groups (belo).

Certain epidemics, such as e.g. smallpox, an infectious bloody diarrhoea and other gastric infections, of which the older natives spoke much, entailed at times increased mortality. Sleepy sickness is said to have occurred in times long past. In the 1890's, however, it was but little known in the central part of the Lower Congo and was unknown in Bwende. With the new era, with its requisitioned bearers and workers, the infection was easily transmitted by sick workers returning home. The mortality was tremendous and the population was everywhere reduced. Hills, groves and plains where there were formerly large villages are now deserted, and only palms, old tillages and burial places still bear witness to their former existence. The government and the missionaries took measures to combat the disease. It was only when physicians began to examine and treat the people in all villages that the epidemic showed signs of abating. Many who were immune did, it is true, survive; but the child mortality was very considerable. This was also combatted, and a noticeable increase in the population has been observed in recent times.

The mortality and the reduced number of children were most marked down the coast and along the great caravan routes and the railway on the south side of the Congo and in the Nyari-Kwilu Valley as far as Brazzaville. The foreign workers and soldiers who were called in also brought syphilis with them, and the disease quickly spread over the whole country. Further, as the people were not accustomed to eating the rice, salt fish and tinned meat etc. that the workers were given, they contracted bloody diarrhoea and died. It was forbidden to take spirits up-country, in the coastal region it had a ruinous effect in the opinion of the natives. The children became small and skinny. The women gave themselves up to prostitution and fertility was much reduced. The custom of giving nkasa-poison to all who were suspected and convicted of *kindoki* (black magic, witchcraft etc.) also affected the mortality. "Poison-drums" and dancing were heard all over the country. This ordeal was, certainly, forbidden by the government, but it continued for a long time in secret here and there. The older natives, however, believe that mortality will now be still greater, as *bandoki* are jubilant now they are able to "eat people" as they like, without needing to eat nkasa-poison.

Armed conflicts also occurred, as a rule between villages and different makanda. As soon as one or a couple of the fighters had been killed, hostilities came to an end, and attempts were made to find out who had been the guilty party. It is an unwritten law that anyone who has given cause for quarrelling, fighting etc. is also held accountable for whatever may result therefrom. Such conflicts were, however, of no great importance in their effect on population increase.

One of the reasons why few mothers have many children is that a woman does not wish to become pregnant again before the first-born child is big enough to fetch wood and water. This is a generally held notion which constitutes part cause of the occurrence of polygamy. Children who are born in too quick succession are believed to be

exposed to the children's disease bwesa (feebleness of body and especially of the legs), to get a large head, little legs like the ntyetye-bird, to lack appetite and become thin. Such a child will empty its bowels where it happens to be sitting, and it may be from three to five years before it can walk. This is thought to be due to the poor quality of the mother's milk. Husband and wife therefore refrain from sleeping together for eighteen months or more. Such a husband is popular with his brothers-in-law and is rewarded for his continence. Otherwise the husband may be criticized by his wife's brothers, who may even threaten to take their sister away. If this threat is put into effect they say: "Now there's an end of your cripples in our kanda!" Moreover, the women who have children in too rapid succession are exposed to ridicule.

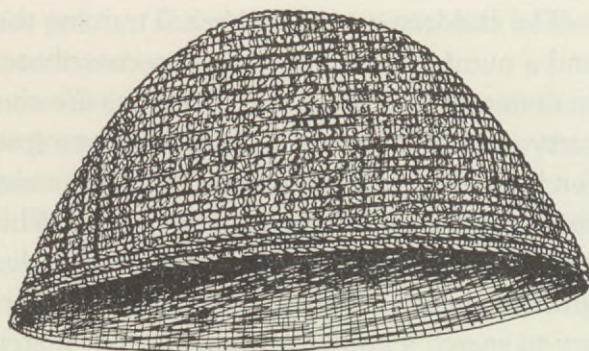


Fig. 3. Cap "with top as usual", Sundi in Kibunzi (Laman 423).

Children are brought up by their parents, boys by the father, girls by the mother. The boys are soon set to do small jobs, such as tending the pigs, tethering the goats, driving in the chickens, learning to catch rats and set snares of various kinds. When they get a little older they must try climbing palms, put timber for building in order, plant bananas and prop them up. They must also prepare the materials for weaving cloth. The girls must follow their mother in the fields with a little basket on their heads and help to gather peanuts; they fetch a little water and bring in lighter wood for fuel. Later they learn to prepare food and do all the odd jobs that fall to a woman's lot. When the boys no longer need to follow the mother about they must run around and look for their own food—palm-nuts, fruit and rats etc.—in the forest. Sometimes they have rather a hard time of it, while the girls follow the mother and get plenty of food. The children of a chief generally learn weaving with raphia, for then they may remain at home with their father. They must also go with the latter and learn to disentangle legal cases and present a case as law-court assistants (zinzonzi). They may perform many other offices which are very lucrative.

The children of slaves may perform the same work, and some of them become very skilled and honoured. They are, however, regarded as workers who may be ordered about and punished. The freeborn must be ordered mildly to do things and with the title taata. If a child refuses to obey when told to fetch a little wood, the mother says: "See, now, taata, be good enough to go. Don't raise any objections, you're Londa's (a nkisi's) child, you may not eat what has been rejected", which implies that he may not eat the food that is cooked with the wood he has refused to fetch. "Go, and when you come back you shall have an egg to roast among the embers of the wood you have fetched."

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The children get their physical training through the work they are taught to perform, and a number of their games also contribute to this. Competitions do not occur except in connection with games. The boys are sometimes taught to wrestle for sport and to carry on mock warfare. A field is chosen from which the peanuts have been harvested, for here there will be no stubble. Older men wrestle with the youngsters, who grow in strength and skill as they get older. When the boys indulge in mock warfare they gather unripe or rotten fruit and range themselves on either side of a tree or other given boundary. They bombard one another with the fruit and try to cross the boundary to snatch a knife (of wood or other material) that the opponent has at his side. The one who takes the greatest number of knives is the winner. Sometimes one of the combatants may get a projectile in the eye and the fight is stopped. At quite a tender age the youngsters must learn to climb palms and to show endurance in hunting and in sustaining the hardships of a caravan journey.

In cases of illness etc. the father and mother see that banganga are summoned. But even if a child is flourishing and comely it must be magically protected from nkisi Bimwanga through futu-bags. The medicine in these is taken from venomous snakes, such as e.g. mpidi and kanza. Other common medicines are also put in them. Two or four futu-bags are made and tied round the chest. These counteract the evil intentions of bandoki or nkisi. With futu-bags containing about the same medicine as mentioned above the grown-up child may also be consecrated to a great nkisi. Such an initiation takes place with regard to the children of an honoured and known person or a chief, who are to be the bearers of the kanda heritage. When they are consecrated to the nkisi the girls are placed on a ndungu-drum and the boys on a gun. A nganga consecrates them with a song, which may run as follows: "Eh Bunzi bule, kiyenge kyangana. Eh Bunzi wata, sakulanga. Eh, Bunzi bule. Wata ku mamba, sakula, wateela ku nseke, sakula."¹

The children may agree to have a funeral feast over a chameleon. They go to the forest and collect papaj-fruit (which represents palm-wine), mavumi-fruit (which is pig), and, further, earth (which is gunpowder). Their hands represent a gun, the sound of shots is in their mouths. When the game is at its height there is a quarrel about a pig or something else. The feast ends and there is a fight. When one is asleep they will take a stalk of mwinga-grass, spit on it and heat it in the fire. When it is hot they make it sizzle on the behind of the sleeper, who wakes up and is angry. When some of the lads cannot get to sleep they collect wood that smokes a lot and put it on the fire, saying "mafwididi-mafwididi" (an exclamation of surprise). When the smoke has got into the eyes, nose and throat of the sleepers they wake up, and the perpetrators of the mischief rush out. Then there is another fight. They may also bind a sleeper to the papyrus mat on which he is sleeping. They will then take a leafy branch and tie it

¹ "Eh, Bunzi, say, peace to another. Eh, Bunzi, speak, avert evil. Eh, Bunzi, say. If you speak on water, avert, if you speak on land, avert."

near the mat with a long string and jerk the string. The sleeper wakes up and immediately begins shouting, for he thinks that bankuyu have bound him.

The moral and intellectual training of the children is very slight; its aim is their own welfare and the prosperity, honour and power of the kanda, as well as the way they are to behave towards their chief, their father and old persons. Fear of the mother is not so great, for she owns the child. As children grow up under the influence of various nkisi and must observe all sorts of prohibitions, however, they must from their earliest years learn respect, reverence and obedience, as well as self-denial, continence and other good qualities.

In the courtyard the chief or some older man teaches the boys good manners, how they are to sit with crossed legs, how they are to pronounce a greeting, express thanks and behave themselves, how they must eat nicely together with older persons, how the older ones may joke with them, how they should reply in this case or when they are addressed in connection with the drinking of palm-wine, how they are to serve the wine, giving first to those who carried it and afterwards to the eldest. They may not be gluttonous when they eat. They must sit down, listen and learn when a lawsuit is going forward, so that they may not allow themselves to be cheated later in life.

The girls learn most of what belongs to a household from the mother. The older ones must take the younger ones on their knees and teach them. When they are a little older they must go to their kanda and remain there for a time, as must also the boys. In addition to all this, the girls early get tuition in the niceties of marital life.

The children are also taught how to behave at the market and on the way there, as well as in connection with other intercourse with strangers. Both the father and the mother are very clever at teaching how different kinds of work are to be performed. The father's chief task is to get the boy to climb palms to knock down palm-nuts and tap palm-wine. He often takes the boy up with him and shows him how to do this. Then the lad is given a little climbing loop and begins to climb by himself. After a while he can help his father. In the same way he must be taught to set snares and traps etc. The mother, in her turn, shows how all the household tasks are to be performed. At a very early stage the children learn to plait little baskets and to do other hand-work. It is important for the parents to teach the children to be helpful, mild and cheerful with one another and with other members of the kanda, for in this case they will be popular and soon married.

The children are encouraged at their tasks in various ways to exert themselves more and to take pains to perfect themselves therein. Disobedient and recalcitrant children are punished with curses and blows, the latter given with a birch or the fist. If a child steals in the kanda it is generally punished by the mother's grinding pepper and rubbing this in the child's eyes or anus. The youngster may also be put up on a shelf in the house and "smoked" with smoking brands put on the fire.

The good qualities that the children must learn in order to be well-behaved apply, however, strictly speaking only with respect to their own kanda. Thus a youngster

who steals from an outsider is not punished. If he is caught red-handed, "that is his business". Adultery is severely punished. Formerly, if the husband caught his wife in the act he might shoot the seducer. Fornication in many other circumstances is not considered punishable. It is remarkable, moreover, that the language has no words for concepts like chaste, honest, sober, modest and so forth, and these must consequently be paraphrased. For "love" the natives use e.g. either "zola" (wish to have) or "tonda" (thank, thank for). For "polite", "courteous" they use "deedama" (be as one ought to be). Europeans frequently think, though wrongly, that the native is not very scrupulous as regards his behaviour. In this way the Europeans have not seldom been in part responsible for the natives' neglect of their good manners.

The history and other traditions of the mvila are related to the men to ensure their preservation. Anyone may learn these if he waits upon the chief with palm-wine and other gifts. Schools in the proper sense of the term there used to be none, nor, originally, secret societies in which tuition was given. The Nkimba Society is a later institution, which came from the coast and did not penetrate farther up-country than the vicinity of Kibunzi. The Ndembo Society on the south bank of the Congo is, certainly, old-established, but it is of but slight importance for any educational purposes.

There has been no special initiation ceremony for adolescents, if one excepts circumcision. A girl, however, may have to go through certain ceremonies after her first menstruation. A pisang and a dizwa-fruit, for example, are roasted and cut into pieces, to be skewered on a stick. A boy is then summoned. He takes a bit of each and runs quickly away. Then they call after him and ask: "Are you a thief?" If he denies this, the girl has been profaned, and must eat of what is skewered on the stick. Other, similar, customs also occur. The woman who is to carry out the nkangwa ceremonies with the girl on account of her marriage must have given birth to a child that is now an adult.

Many circumcise the children while they are still so small that the mothers can bathe the navel and the circumcised organ at the same time. Others, again, make the circumcision when the children are from eight to fifteen years old or more. The operation is generally performed at the time when the nsafu-trees bear fruit or peanuts and other foods are harvested, so that there will be plenty of food for those who are circumcised. The operation is if possible performed when there are a number of boys of a suitable age in the village. On such occasions a practised and skilful circumciser is sent for. The latter should refrain from eating food with pepper in it and abstains from intercourse with his wife, so that the operation may be successful and not so painful. The business is begun early in the morning. The boy must sit astride a wooden pole, so that the foreskin may be easily cut off against the wood, following a line that has been drawn round the penis with ash. Many circumcisers, however, hold the penis in their hand and cut off the foreskin with a rapid movement. Before the operation is begun, the boy must confess if he has had coitus with any girl or girls. He must in this case also give their names. He does this as he fears that he may otherwise get mpelesores or even die. Then one lad after the other is circumcised. Each one goes imme-

diately to a little pit that he has dug for the blood to drip into. This pit also contains a little fire and palm-kernels, so that smoke and heat rise up and dry the wound. If the boy feels pain and wants to scream, he may not cry "yaaya ngudi" (mother), but only "taata" (father): "Eh, taa, taa, taa, I'm dying!" Nor may he call on a girl, for then he will fare badly.

The boys must afterwards sleep in a house for men, so that they are not visible for women. After the circumcision the boys must observe the following prohibitions. They may not shell peanuts, nor may they eat from a mbongu basket-dish, or eat yuuma with pepper in it. They may not look under the bed, or seek on the shelf; they must not be with their mother, or be seen by women, or be with one who has had coitus with his wife. On the day of the circumcision and the day after this the boys must not wash the wound or put anything on it. But after the first day they may put palm-oil on the wound and earth from a ground up subterranean termite-nest, which is black, honeycombed and porous. This should be ground on a stone and strewn on the wound. The ends of nyanga-grass from an old roof must be burned and rubbed to powder and also strewn on the wound. This treatment is continued until the sore is healed.

The reason for the operation is considered to be that the ancestors of the tribe handed down the custom because they believed that bakisi and the gods had previously circumcised the foetus, since it was so at birth. Similarly, they believe that the snail is circumcised in its shell. Who does this they do not know, but they suppose it must be the one that circumcises the child in the womb. There is, however, no question of any command from the natives' ancestors that boys must be circumcised. In several places, moreover, the custom is not observed so strictly, for no-one need pay a fine for not undergoing the operation. But another cause has been sufficiently strong to preserve the custom, viz, that all who refuse to submit to circumcision are made butts for jokes of the worst kind and are not popular among the women. When the men assemble to drink palm-wine in the courtyard they generally say: "Mfuku a sutu, mfuku a sutu."¹ The older men, for the rest, liken the foreskin to the muzzle of a shrew-mouse. Further, a woman will not marry an uncircumcised man, partly because he is considered to be too lustful, and partly because he is not considered to be able to beget children in the right way. Further, for reasons of modesty it is very difficult for the woman to perform the vanga bakala custom, as it is her duty to do.

¹ "Smell of foreskin, smell of foreskin."

Marriage

The premarital relationship between man and woman was formerly much more conventional than it now is, when the general attitude in these matters is in many respects slacker. This is to be noticed in the fact that the farther upcountry one may travel, e.g. to Bwende, where in the old days the kanda was the strict guardian of premarital behaviour, one finds now the same general slackening. Relations with other unmarried persons, such as divorcees, widows or those who are unwilling to marry, are very loose, and in these cases unlegalized sex relations are not considered criminal, i.e. they do not entail any fine. A loose woman was formerly, however, a frequent butt for the gossips at the village square (boko).

There are three different types of marriage, a loose marriage without any sanction, a so-called trial marriage and a legal marriage. In the first-mentioned case no attention is paid to the relations obtaining between the parties. A trial marriage may be entered upon after a certain period, when the two parties have become acquainted with each other. It develops into a regular (legal) marriage at the time of the settlement. The honoured, legal marriage (longo) is entered upon without intercourse before the marriage settlement.

If the young man and the girl have agreed to a longo-marriage and this has met with the approval of her father, mother and brothers, the fiancée must go to the village of her betrothed and begin to cultivate and prepare field allotments for seed. She may not go alone, but must be accompanied by women from her kanda; and if she should wish to speak with her fiancé in his house, two or three women must go with her. A betrothed girl must not be garrulous, but reserved. Her fiancé may chat with his future sisters-in-law, but he may not eat together with them or with his bride-to-be, for it is forbidden for him and his brothers to see them eat. If this should happen, even unintentionally, he must give a propitiatory present as a forfeit, for this shows lack of respect for them. If the fiancée and the sisters-in-law should see the future bridegroom eating, they, too, must give a propitiatory present.

The fiancé was formerly not allowed to have any intercourse with his future bride until the day on which the longo-payment was made for her. If he had infringed this rule, he had first to hand over various possessions before the longo-settlement was

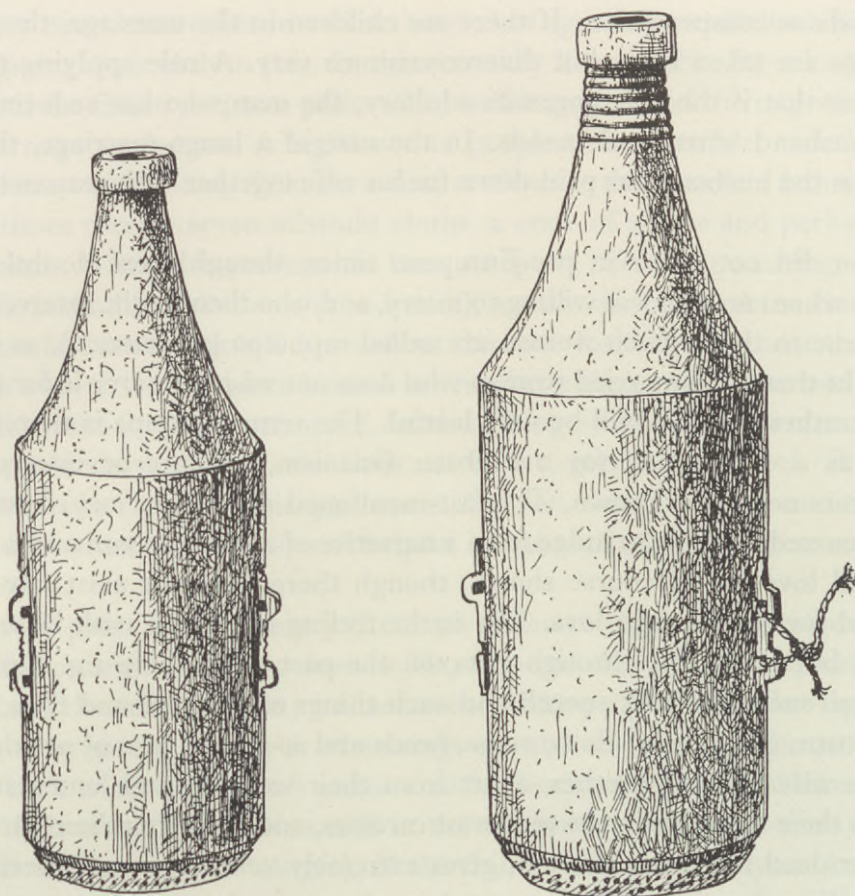


Fig. 4. Drums (*ngoma*), Sundi in Mayombe: a, "child" (Laman 703); b, "mother" (Laman 704).

made. The fiancé is therefore careful not to flout this prohibition. If he is suspected to have done so, then he and his fiancée must prove their innocence with an oath made before a *nkisi* or through a so-called *bau-ordeal*. The woman, too, might be examined. If everything was found to be in order, the woman and the marriage were held in high honour. They were, however, exposed to great temptations, for both parties frequently brought gifts to each other, she a tasty dish and he palm-wine, beads etc., when there was much chatter and merriment between them and others.

At a longo-settlement the father of the fiancée was to receive a pig and cloth, the father's *kanda* a pig, the chief for her *kanda* three *mbandu* (worth 30 francs), the mother cloth and the brothers-in-law ten to twenty *mbandu* (100 to 200 francs). Thus in the case of the longo-marriage a definite price is fixed which the man is to pay for his wife to her brothers or uncle, as security for a marriage with legal right to the wife. If the wife dies, or if she wants to be divorced from him, the husband must receive back all that he has given for her. If her brothers or she herself should demand divorce, then, as also in the case of the wife's decease, the husband must be given another woman

from the kanda as compensation. If there are children in the marriage, then as a rule no possessions are taken back, but divorce customs vary. A rule applying to all marriages requires that if the wife commits adultery, the man who has seduced her shall pay to the husband what he demands. In the case of a longo-marriage, the seducer must pay what the husband has paid down for his wife together with reasonable interest on this.

Prostitution did not occur in pre-European times, though there doubtless existed older women whom no one was willing to marry, and who then might receive those who wished to come to them. Such women are called mpumpa (unmarried), as it is by no means thought that an unmarried woman who does not wish to marry is for this reason inaccessible, rather that she will be very lustful. The term mpumpa is therefore rather unfortunate as a designation for a celibate. Onanism, sodomy or intercourse with animals appears not to be known. The last-mentioned aberration may, however, perhaps have occurred if one is to judge from a narrative of a lewd woman and a dog.

Feeling and love are of course shown, though there does not exist any really expressive word for the concept love. Nor is the feeling expressed with kisses, caresses and the like, but preferably through gifts, on the part of the wife e.g. through good food, submissiveness, friendly speech and such things as the husband likes. The husband, in his turn, gives meat, cloth, rings, beads and so on. In case of accident, illness or death, the wife and the mother, apart from their weeping and lamentations, give expression to their thoughts in the tenderest caresses, and by laying their cheeks on the sick, dying or dead husband. He, too, gives extremely vehement and forceful expression to his feelings on such occasions.

If a man takes a liking to a young girl he must first try to find out whether she returns his feelings. He makes her a present of e.g. tobacco and some other little trifle. If she accepts this, the man's enquiry is so far answered that he may go to her father, mother and maternal uncle. He might also discreetly ask the girl if she would like to accept a little palm-wine and some other trifle. If she answers: "That is your business", he knows that she likes him, and they fix a day for a meeting. He perhaps asks: "Have you not already a young fiancé?" To which she may reply: "No, I have not." But she may also say: "Yes", and add: "The friendship should come to an end." The suitor answers: "That's good."

When they have separated, he must send a woman and a man to his fiancée's brother. They carry with them palm-wine and a piece of baaku-cloth (about 8 m), if the fiancée has been taught good manners for ménage. When the beadsman and the woman arrive at the house of his fiancée's elder brother they ask whether she is already affianced. "If this is not so, let us hold council." The brother sends a messenger to his sister to ask: "Shall we drink the palm-wine that has been sent or not?" If the sister replies: "Drink!" then he knows that her answer is in the affirmative. In Mayombe the fiancée generally accompanies those who have carried the palm-wine to the house of the suitor, if this is nearby, and she enters it. The suitor must give his fiancée a shawl and cloth for handker-

chiefs. They court each other in various ways, but agree above all not to see each other eat, even giving their oath to this. In this way they live together for a longer or shorter period, until the fiancé prepares palm-wine, wedding gifts and the requisite possessions for the marriage settlement. A big crowd of people then assemble, and the palaver on both sides may take a long time. As a first settlement the fiancée's father and brother may sometimes receive seven mbandu cloths, a crate of spirits and perhaps also other pieces of cloth. When this present has been accepted, the whole marriage settlement is fixed at ten mbandu-equivalents (100 francs), a crate of spirits, three cloths and some other trifles. In certain tracts it was only at the time for the settlement that the fiancée "was taken away from the place behind her mother's back, where she had lain before".

The man wants to get an energetic, hard-working and beautiful woman with a good reputation, and above all one who does not steal, gossip or quarrel. The woman, in her turn, wants to find the same qualities in the man, who should in addition to this be of a mild disposition, generous, and helpful in connection with illness and the care of the children.

In different parts of the country there are different types of marriage. The kumbi-marriage, for example, which occurs in Mayombe, is characterized by certain ceremonies, of which the following may be mentioned. The youth first strikes up a friendship with the girl by giving her a pair of earrings or mbwela-beads. If she accepts these he will come back another day with palm-wine for her brothers and ask them if they will marry off their sister. If the answer is in the affirmative, the palm-wine is served; the girl herself receives the first mugful. If she drinks this, then everyone knows that she has given her consent, and her brothers drink also. When they have drunk and expressed thanks, they say: "Now let us see a visible sign of your wish." The fiancé then gives a piece of cloth worth 5 francs and a goat, as well as a piece of cloth for the mother of his future bride. When this is concluded the fiancé is told the price for the bride-to-be. This may amount to from thirty to fifty pieces of cloth (worth 5 francs apiece) and one or two pigs. When he has paid this he has concluded the marriage with her, but he must wait until the girl has reached puberty. Then the fiancé returns with three calabashes of palm-wine and requests that kumbi-ceremonies shall take place. The brothers of the fiancée drink the palm-wine and say to him: "Go, and we shall make her go into kumbi."

When the man returned the oldest women must immediately seize the fiancée forcibly and take her into the house of an unmarried man, where they pulverize a lot of tukula-red that is then rubbed on the girl and her clothes. Afterwards she is to sleep in a bed in the kumbi-house (the tukula-red house) with young men, not, however, with her fiancé. She must remain in the house for about seven or eight months, and has, amongst other things, to sleep with all the young girls living in the village and in the adjacent villages. They may also come and sleep in the kumbi-house together with the young men from the village and its environs. They joke with one another in all sorts of ways and each sleeps on his or her own mat and bed. Some, however, are unable to refrain

from coitus, but this must be indulged in secretly. All the young girls and youths staying in the house rub tukula-red all over their bodies.

When the seven or eight months have elapsed they must pulverize a whole basketful of tukula-red. The fiancée's brothers and her mother's kanda must prepare a great feast, perhaps twenty pots, and serve the food to those who have pulverized the tukula-dye. When they eat in the kumbi-house they may not throw away the scraps, but must collect all the leavings in mpidi-baskets for the day when they shall depart. The young men who have been sleeping there must then go out and fetch ash and make a leaf-package of this together with stones and palm-kernels. When the young girls pass out through the door the youths hit them hard with these packages to "free" them from the kumbi-house. The pain of the blows may cause the girls to weep bitterly. They must not, however, get angry with the youths who have "freed" them, though if the pain is too much for them this may happen; but this may mean the end of the friendship. The girls, who have been smothered with the ash, go straight to the water to bathe. After this a day is fixed for them to take the fiancée to her future home. All the way to the village they sing songs, as for example: "Lumba e-e, mwana ami. Lumba bindele, e mwana ami. Twala masambu walundila kumbi e-e, kwanaana e-e-e-e."¹

At the forking of the road to the village where the fiancé lives they all press on the affianced girl and prod her in the back. Her mother and other women urge her on. But they linger at the forking of the road to sing, sitting on their mpidi-baskets, for it is their travelling day. The brothers-in-law of the fiancé have prepared some game or fish and bananas in many baskets for her, so that she shall not want for anything to prepare a meal for her husband on the day of her arrival in his home. The women at the forking of the road are singing when the fiancé comes and meets them. He must have with him two lengths of cloth to place on the back of his fiancée. When her companions go past on the village street they sing, and the fiancé has a lot of shots fired until they get to his house, where the young couple are to live in the sequel.

The women who have brought the young bride home may not return until they have procured her a pile of fire-wood. When this has been done and they are ready to go, the husband must reward them with a length of cloth each, and they depart. The marriage ceremony has now been concluded. A day or so after this the brothers of the wife bind two pigs and take these to the husband to "lead him into the home". When he has received the gift he must ponder its value and pay this. Should he be unable to do this his wife's brothers turn back immediately. They will then say that they have given the husband the possessions which he had paid for the marriage, and the husband cannot then have given anything for the marriage, even if his presents have exceeded in value that of the two pigs. When the brothers-in-law have "led him into the home" they give him certain instructions and the wife is told to be well-disposed and always to obey her husband. To the husband they say: "Listen, if she steals, then bring her to

¹ "Pay (generously) e-e, my child. Pay bindele (pieces of cloth measuring 4 meters) e-e, my child. Bring salt fish (from Europe) that you may keep kumbi e-e."

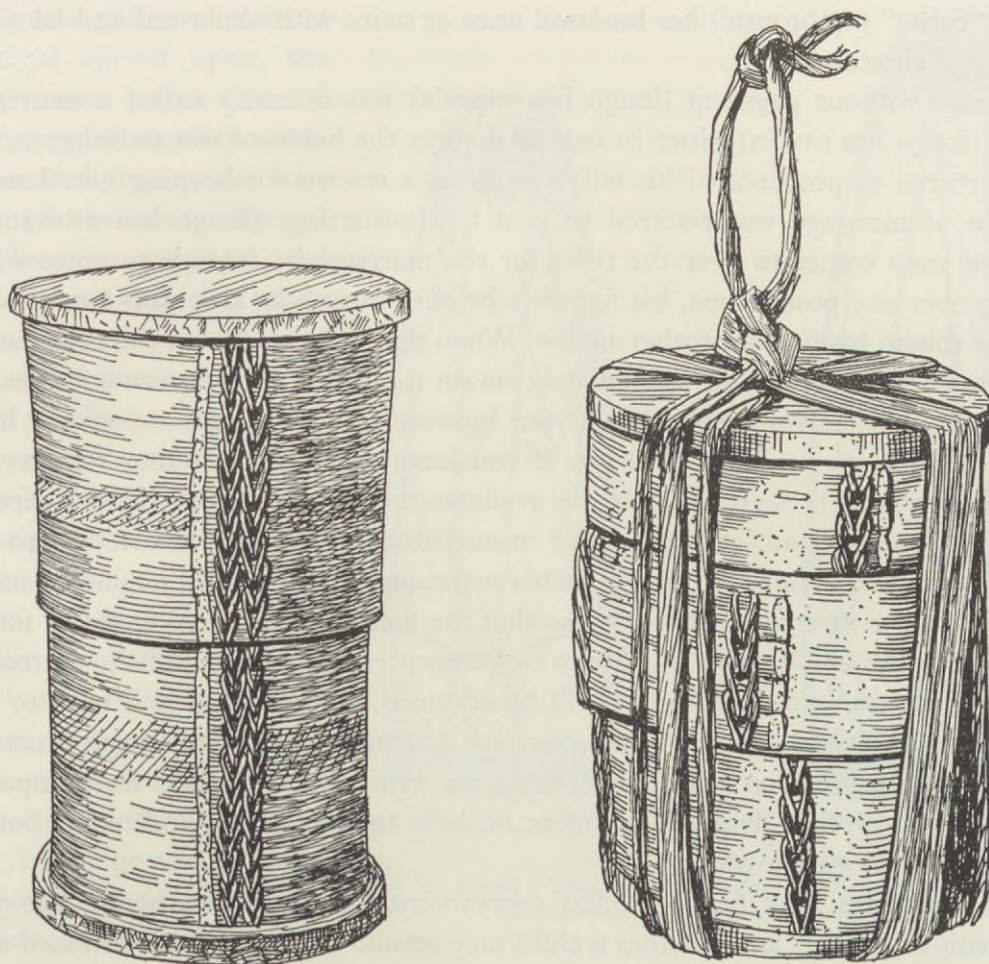


Fig. 5. Bark-boxes, lukobe: a, Sundi in Kingoyi (Laman 281); b, Sundi in Lolo (Laman 1432).

us. If she has lax morals, then conduct her to us. If your wife contradicts you, don't strike her with your fist, we don't want to hear of anything of the sort." Whereupon they go home. If the wife should anger her husband they remain at logger-heads until she goes to her brothers and asks for a hen of them to placate him. If the wife steals, her husband immediately takes her to those who "possess" her, so that they may punish her. After this the two are to be reconciled again; perhaps the husband is then given a goat. If, however, he is still ill-tempered, the wife shall refuse reconciliation and get back all her own possessions, for the marriage is at an end. Through the kumbi-ceremonies the wife was supposed to give birth to shapely children who would live for a long time. These customs have, however, begun to be forgotten.

In certain tracts, at least, the woman who is to conduct the nkwanga-ceremonies with a girl who has attained the age of puberty must have given birth to her first child. If there is to be marital harmony it is necessary, amongst other things, that the wife

should "bathe" (embrocate) her husband once or twice with nkula-red and oil all over his body at all seasons.

Marriage without payment (*longo lwa mpeela*) was formerly called a marriage of returns (*longo lwa ntwila*), since in case of divorce the husband was to be given a part of the returns or proceeds of his wife's work as a reward for keeping her. Later on, this type of marriage was referred to as a bottle-marriage (*longo lwa mbwata*), for when the man comes to hear the rules for the marriage he intends to enter without handing over any possessions, his fiancée's brother must take an empty brandy-bottle and give this to his future brother-in-law. When the latter has heard the rules he must as a sign of his endorsement immediately smash the bottle. The agreement runs thus: "If you should hate your wife, that is your business, you won't get any goods. If your wife should die, you will get nothing. If you leave your wife, she may remarry. You will get nothing." If there is no bottle available the brother gives a little gunpowder to the husband instead, and the latter immediately strews this about. To give still further stress to the rules governing such a marriage the future brother-in-law may get his own wife to stretch out her legs, so that the fiancé must step over them, for then according to the old laws he is liable to be prosecuted for a breach of the marriage. If he afterwards wants a divorce this will be adduced, and the man will have to pay a heavy fine. On this account a bottle-marriage is considered to last longer than other marriages; in connection with the ceremonies with the bottle and the gunpowder, moreover, the brother demands payment because the fiancé has broken his bottle or strewn about his gunpowder.

Trial marriages may be concluded everywhere, to ascertain whether the young people suit each other and whether a child may result. When a girl has attained a marriageable age she may not abandon herself to wantonness with young men but must wait until someone comes to court her. The suitor comes to her father with from three to five pieces of cloth and with palm-wine in order to *tobula mwana* (that is to be the first to have coitus with the daughter and teach her what it is necessary to know about marriage and marital relations). The man must know this. If the girl likes him, she stays, and with the help of others that he takes with him the man hands over presents which are not for marriage, but for a period of living together. If the girl does not soon become pregnant, the man has no great desire to marry her. If the girl, too, is disinclined to marry, her father arrives, when the period agreed upon is at an end, with a large boiling of ducks and hens to repay the man for what he has received. After this the girl is free and may marry other men. If a girl has not known a man or has begun to have coitus without having been taught *ntoko* (the art of living together), she is exposed to much ridicule. If a young man wants to marry a girl belonging to one of these categories he applies to a woman who may teach her what she needs to know for marriage. The woman receive a shawl or a piece of cloth as a fee, and it is only now that the girl is considered properly eligible for marriage.

If a maid has been married off as a girl, and is seduced after puberty, before the

future husband has fulfilled the conditions agreed upon, the seducer must pay a fine for kimpinga (adultery) if the matter comes to light, and this may be through a bau-test. If the girl soon becomes pregnant and gives birth to a child, her kanda is pleased and thankful, and the husband does not need to pay for the bride, for her relations say: "The child has settled the marriage business. We do not want possessions." Many men may perhaps wish to make presents by way of a pledge for their right to the girl as a "legal" wife. It may happen, however, that on the occasion of the settlement between the parties she says: "Do not accept goods; I shall go and sit down in his house. Find someone else that you can force to pay." In this case the man need not pay.

Girls who grow up and are intended as wives for the chief and for whom goods have been paid in advance, but who refuse to marry, may not become attached to any other young man until their brothers have given back the presents received. If a girl wants to choose her own husband she is not liked by her brothers, and is called nkwa kimpumbulu (cheat etc.). No one, however, can be married off against her will or by force. If this is done it is followed by lawsuits and even war. Child-marriages did not formerly occur; but west of Brazzaville they have for a long time been practised in order that the girls might be married off quickly to chiefs and other rich men. This, however, has meant reduced nativity instead of the reverse.

Polygamy (nganda) is of general occurrence, but monogamy is very frequent, since many natives prefer one wife to several as in this way they avoid quarrelling between the wives and the consequent lawsuits. A good many of these originally monogamous men have, however, on becoming wealthier, procured several wives, as they have had no other way of converting their possessions than by entering new longo-marriages. The poorer natives, on the other hand, must be content with monogamy, and this not infrequently with older, discarded women. In former times a man who had many wives

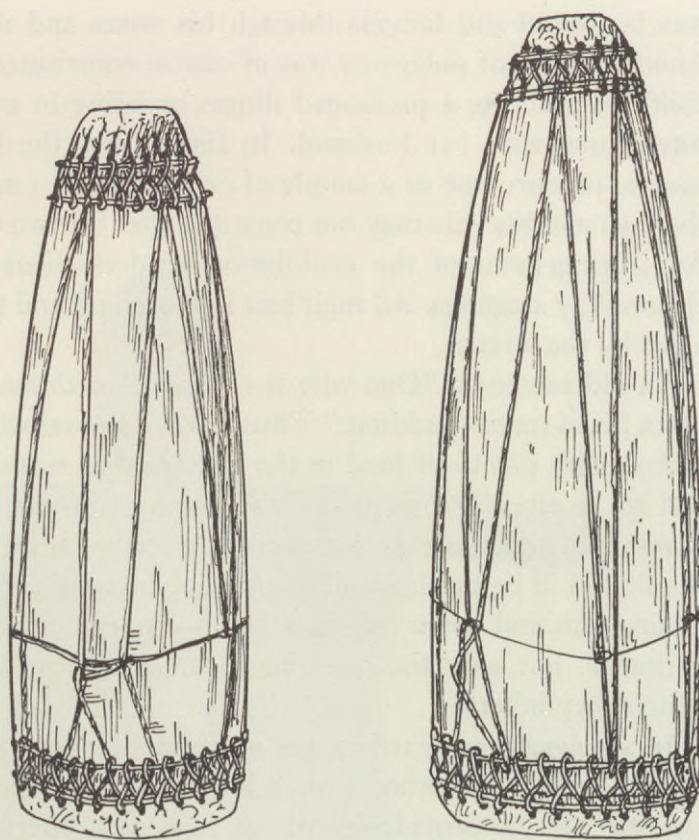


Fig. 6. Drums ("newly-made", tutila), Sundi in Nganda: a, "child" (Laman 701); b, "mother" (Laman 702).

was honoured and famous through his wives and their children and grandchildren.¹ Another cause of polygamy was of course constituted by the fact of the wife getting a child, contracting a prolonged illness or being in other ways prevented from having intercourse with her husband. In these cases the husband would, according to his means, procure one or a couple of extra wives. In many places it is also required that the man and his wife may not come together for two or three years after a confinement. An infringement of the prohibition renders them impure, and they must then be cleansed by a nganga. All their hair is shaven off and thrown into the water to be carried away by the stream.

An old saw says: "One wife is connected with bandoki", and another: "One wife is like a bit of maize-pudding." Thus to have several wives is an honour. A man may then reckon with plenty of food in the courtyard to sustain the children and grandchildren and to receive his parents-in-law, brothers-in-law, friends and strangers. If all the wives pool their yuuma-pots and palm-wine, there are great feasts. If the husband should fall ill he can have all the nursing he wants. When he dies there will be many to mourn him and there will be a famous funeral feast. The survivors will extol the inheritance, not only the material goods, but also the domestic animals and widows, which they inherit.

In a polygamous marriage the most popular wife will be the one who looks after the husband best, and who is most hospitable and venerable. This wife is called nkama (spouse). If she provides plenty of food and otherwise understands what is required for marital harmony she will also be called kundi (the chief, most well-liked friend). To such a wife the husband may, even if he is a chief, entrust the power to rule over the other wives and have control over his possessions, and to receive strangers in his absence. When he comes home she is attentive to his wants, and serves good oil-dishes, soups, peanuts etc.

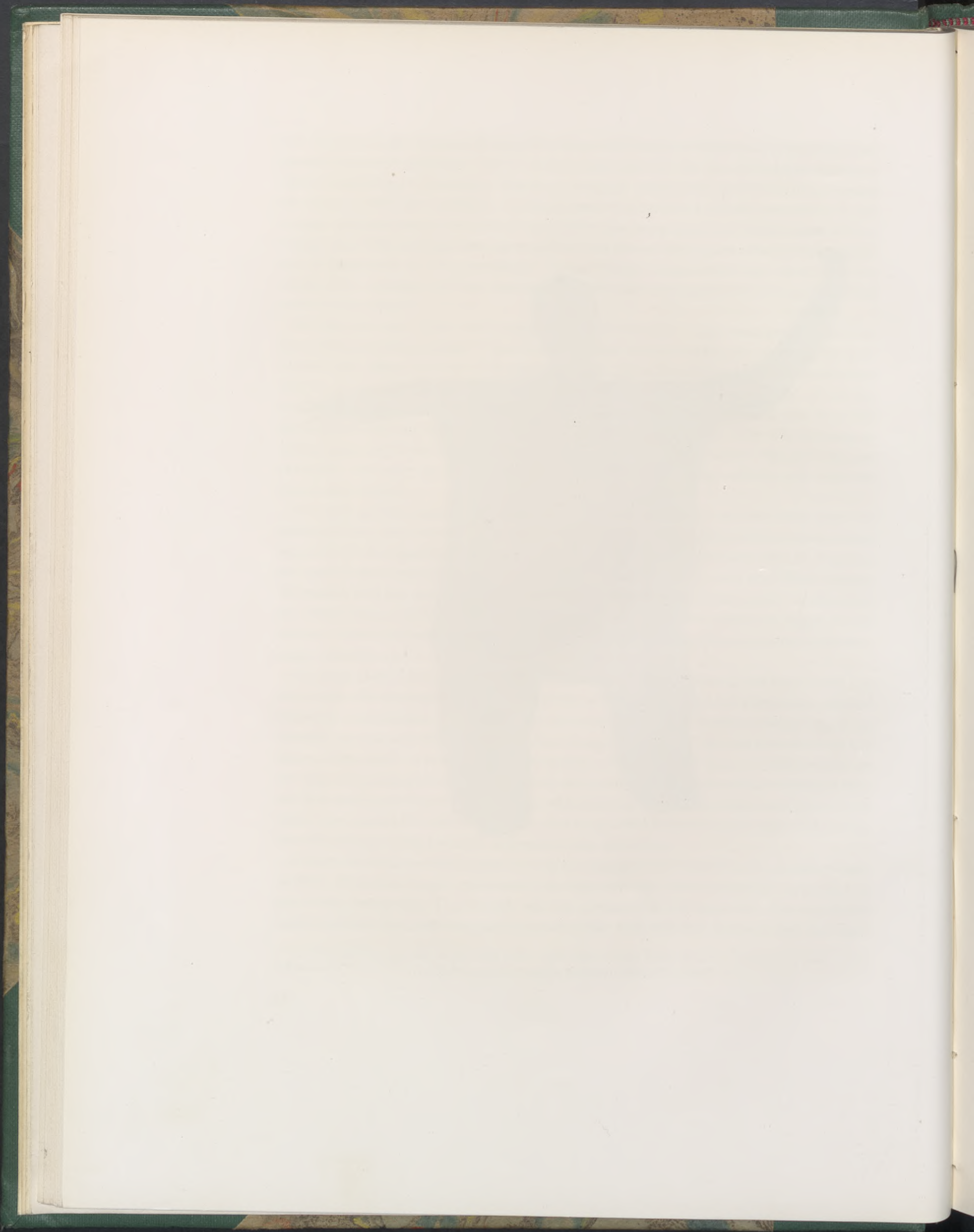
If a man should be unable to pay the stipulated price for one of his later wives, he blows his nsika-pipe publicly at once, so that all may know that he is unable to pay the price but nevertheless intends to keep the woman. At the slightest disagreement or discord the wife may then say: "What have you given for me?" In this case she does not respect him; but if it is nevertheless a woman who stays with him, it will be either an old hag or a young girl for whom he does not need to pay. Wives are not willingly lent, but if a man is unable to pay a fine to which he has been sentenced, a member of his kanda may receive the wife as a pledge until he gets the required sum to pay off his debt. He will then get back his wife. Polyandry does not occur.

A man who had betrayed a girl during her engagement was formerly punished very severely. If he was caught red-handed he might be shot, and to save his life he had to pay a very heavy fine. The woman was not punished in the same way, but her fiancé might abandon her and demand his goods back, and then her brothers had the right

¹ A rich man will only marry women who fetch a high price. A chief, it may be said in passing, may have as many as fifty wives.



Plate 1. Nyombo, Sudi in Kingoyi (S.E.M.: 06.58.1).



to punish her. Village lawsuits used to comprise for the most part such cases. To get binding proof the woman would be exposed to the *bau-ordeal* or she had to swear an oath before some *nkisi* and so forth. One who had seduced the wife of a chief was as a rule punished with death. There exist, however, men who welcome such cases of adultery because they get money from the fines to which the culprits are sentenced. With cheating and all kinds of wiles they try to construct such offences.

A woman who is neither married nor engaged, however, has a certain right to give herself to any man at all, and she can in any case not be sentenced to pay a fine. But frequently the brothers may punish their sister and even try to marry her off, as she is forbidden to live an abandoned life. In certain tracts custom prescribes that a man who seeks out an unmarried woman to have intercourse with her must first ask her father and mother, and if they give their consent he must pay the woman. If he has clandestine intercourse with the woman he is committing an offence against her parents and must, if found out, pay a fine to them. If the affair is only for a night, the fine is small and the woman herself may keep the forfeit. No one from another *kanda* than the owner's may have intercourse with a female slave, for she is not free. Nor may she herself invite to intimacy for in both cases the man would be "making a hole in another's property". A man may tempt a woman in many ways, especially with a gift of e.g. an arm-ring or something of the sort. This may, for the rest, be handed over by proxy. If a woman has been receiving a man for a certain time, she may not receive others during this period. Frequently a lasting friendship may arise, and a *longo-marriage* be concluded.

The wedding ceremonies are characterized chiefly by the assembling of relatives with food and drink to decide upon the price to be stipulated for the bride and in what kind this shall be paid. The parties themselves are not present, for they have not yet terminated *nsoni* (reverence for each other) by eating together. The wedding feast proper does not take place until some time after this, about a year or more, when the wife's *kanda* will arrive with one or more pigs and other presents as *matondo* (a sign of gratitude) for the meat, fish and other gifts that the husband has given his wife and of which her *kanda* has also received a portion. The husband comes with a spokesman who will reply to what the spokesman of his wife's *kanda* has said; the latter declares i.a. how many pots of *yuuma*—perhaps from ten to thirty—the visitors have brought with them. Then both the parties will make a calculation to see which of them has given most, and retire to reach a settlement. As a rule they are thankful and satisfied. It does, however, happen that one of the parties is dissatisfied and no thanksgiving feast is held; they break up, taking with them their pigs and *yuuma* pots.

No religious ceremonies occur. But a man who has married a beautiful wife who is able to set the young men's hearts on fire may send for *Mwandazi's nganga* to protect his wife with a medicine that she may wear in the corner of her loin-cloth. If she should be violated by anyone, this medicine will punish the culprit in a way that will preclude the possibility of further seductions. If the husband should die, and the wife be in-

herited by another, the latter must first summon the same nganga before he can take over the widow. They go down to the water. Others go on one side, but a nganga stays behind to bundana ye nkento (have coitus with her). After this they both bathe in the water. Mwandazi has therewith disappeared from the woman's body, and the inheritor receives her without mischief.

For the marital relations also other nkisi may be used both by the man and the woman. Thus the former uses a nkisi-medicine to increase, diminish or take away desire for the wife. The latter, again, may use medicines to cure illness that has been caused as she carried on coitus on the bare ground or in some other way profaned the norms for wedded life. In every mvila there is an irremissible law according to which no one may have intercourse with a woman on the bare ground. The woman is likewise strictly forbidden to keep her menstruation a secret, for as long as this lasts she must move to the detached house set aside for this purpose. When her menstruation is finished the woman may leave the house to go and bathe, and rub oil and sweet-smelling herbs on her person, such as e.g. lwangu-lwangu, after which she may go home. Also the garments and other things she has had with her must be washed. If during her menstruation the woman should go to any other house, this and the entire village are considered unclean, and a nganga must be summoned to purify them. Otherwise the people would be wounded in war and be overtaken by all sorts of accidents, such as falling down from trees; or else snakes would enter the house.

When cohabiting they both lie on their side. The wife must otherwise always lie behind her husband with her face towards him. After coitus the couple may not get off the couch hastily, they must "grab in water" or put their feet on the ground together. If any seminal fluid has come on the man, his wife must wipe this off his legs and his penis with a little rag soaked in oily red pomade. This is called vanga bakala (cleaning up the man). The woman must clean herself up without help. Farther upcountry they wipe away everything with the finger and then wipe the finger on the sole of the foot. This must be done both by the married and by the unmarried women. The morning after coitus the wife must go and bathe first thing, before she begins to prepare food. Some slipshod habits occur in this connection which the husband does not like, and which may occasion divorce. When indulging in ntoko (sexual intercourse) the wife is expected to manifest her lively feelings in words and movements to please her husband. Young unmarried women do this willingly to please the men who visit them.

Men who have drunk too much palm-wine often visit bihunda (older, unmarried women). Other men, too, who for one reason or another are not popular with younger women, frequent them. If through carelessness a man should find himself alone with a married and desired woman and have intercourse with her, the maxim concerning the mother-in-law is applied: "If you strike your mother-in-law, then strike hard" (for you will in any case be severely punished). In a word: do not be temperate.

The marriage settlement is arrived at between the two makanda represented by the contracting parties. The wedding gift is paid to the bride's brother, maternal uncle and

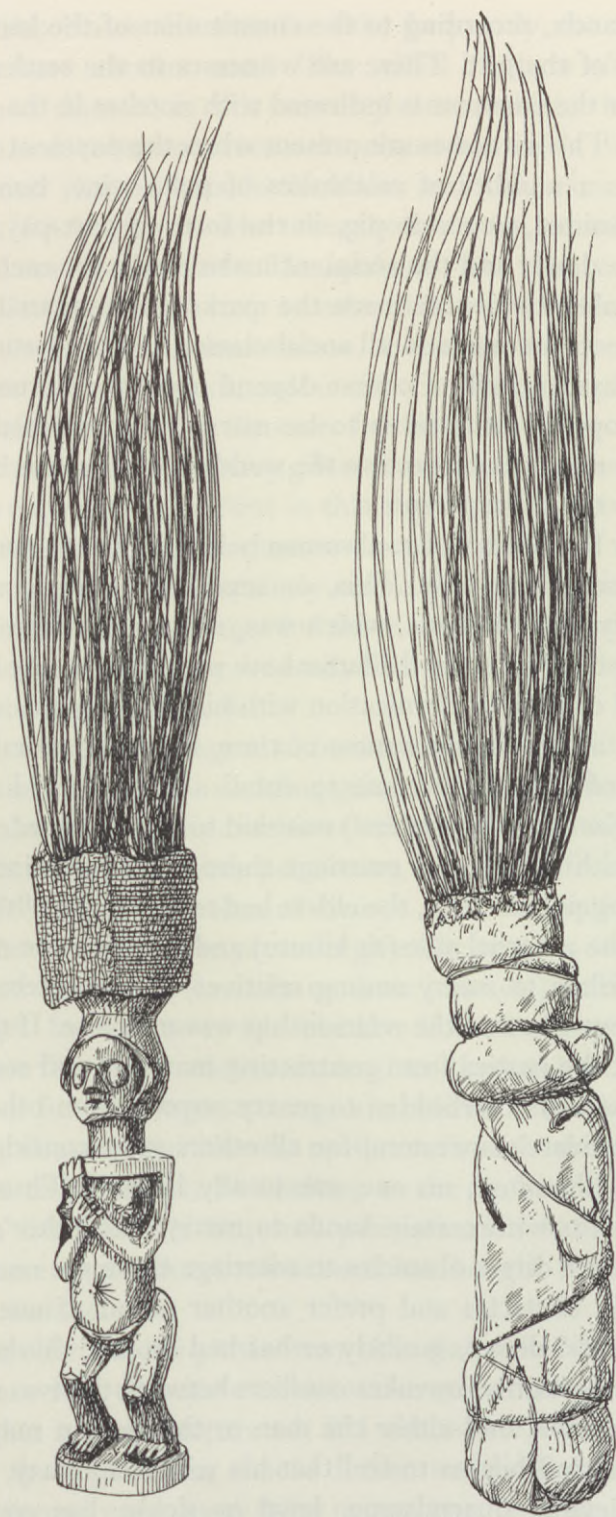


Fig. 7. Whisks: a, for a nzonzi (nsesa), Sundi in Kinkenge (Laman 719); b, for a chief (nkama mfumu or mfunka), Sundi in Vungu (Laman 557).

to the chief of her kanda, according to the constitution of the kanda. Her father gets only a small portion of the gift. There are witnesses to the settlement, as in all such cases; and the day for the payment is indicated with notches in the post of the house or with knots in a cord. The witnesses are present when the payment is made. If the payment agreed upon is a number of calabashes of palm-wine, bunches of bananas or parts of a domestic animal, as a rule pig, in the form of part-payments over a longer period, then both the donor and the recipient make marks for each instalment, and on the day when the final settlement is made the marks are compared, to see if they tally or not. Such agreements are made in all social classes, but the nature of the agreement and the size of the payment will of course depend upon the circumstances, whether it is a beautiful and popular girl who is to be married and so forth. When slaves are married off it is their owners who receive the wedding gift, unless both the contracting parties are owned by the same person.

No one may marry his "sister", i.e. a woman belonging to the same kanda and having the same mvila-name as the man. This, or sexual intercourse with a "sister" was looked upon as a very serious crime, which was, moreover, severely punished. It was likened to the pairing of dogs, since the latter have no notion of any kivila (clan-system). Thus a man who had committed fornication with his "sister" was regarded as if he had had intercourse with a dog. In the course of time, however, morals have become less stringent, and such offences have come to entail a fine. According to the tradition, NATONA (one of the Kongo's clan-fathers) was said to "have regarded his sister".¹

If in connection with a projected marriage there was uncertainty as to how closely related the contracting parties were, the elders had to count over "the mothers" (ngudi) for the relatives on the paternal side (za kibutu) and those on the maternal side (za di-kanda). If anyone wished to marry among relatives on the paternal side the chief of the mvila must find out whether the relationship was too close. If this was the case the elders had to prevent the parties from contracting marriage and seek a wife in another kanda. Formerly, it was also forbidden to marry anyone from other mvila than those espoused by the candidate's ancestors, for all others were considered as strangers or enemies, with which, therefore, no one was to ally himself. Thus the contraction of marriage and agreements with certain kanda to marry each other's daughters became a lasting tradition. Other direct obstacles to marriage there are none. The kanda may, certainly, raise certain obstacles and prefer another union, if one of the parties, for instance, has a congenital defect, is sickly or has bad morals, this may play a role; but force is seldom used, for it only provokes conflicts between the two makanda.

Divorce is very common, and either the man or the woman may take the first step towards this. If a husband begins to feel that his wife is too lazy, mean, disobedient, insolent, gossipy, thieving, quarrelsome, lewd or sickly, has congenital defect and remains infertile, he demands a divorce. The wife may adduce the same grounds against the husband, or that he strikes her and is cruel. If the woman does not get any

¹ NATONA watona busi kyandi.

children she may also blame the man for this; frequently, for the rest, she wants to have another man. The wife's brothers often intervene and demand divorce; in this case they come and fetch her.

If the husband has decided on divorce he places his wife's mat, baskets, pots and other chattels outside the house and makes her go home to her kanda. If it is the wife who takes the first step, she takes her things and goes home to her kanda. The husband, too, if he considers he has cause for complaint, may summon his wife's kanda to instruct or punish her for her misdemeanours, or else take her home. A day is fixed for the final settlement, unless either of the parties has changed his (her) mind, as is often the case. In this latter event the party in question comes with a placatory gift and expresses the desire to continue the marriage. An agreement in this sense is then arrived at. Otherwise, the interested parties meet to discuss the case. If the differences are not too great this frequently means that the marriage will continue, if it is a longo-marriage, for these are difficult to dissolve. Other kinds of marriage may be easily dissolved, for in these property does not play such a big role.

If, in spite of all, a longo-marriage is to be dissolved, there will be a long deliberation as to how the wedding gifts are to be paid back. The husband fixes a day on which he and his relatives will come to get them back. He takes with him a little palm-wine, rubs his wife with a palm-nut and is given a hen as a token of divorce. The negotiations then begin. When he has listed the presents given he receives some hens and a so-called kyalu-bed (i.e. two or three blankets) and his younger brothers get from three to five blankets if the longo-price has been high. When the wife's relatives have given these things, all the presents he gave for the longo-marriage are returned. The husband may, however, also demand interest on them. In such cases the children cannot pass to the father, but belong to the mother. If she has worked hard in the field and acquired possessions of her own, the parties may share these, for the husband has bought the hoe with which she has worked.

In connection with divorce the parties may call upon nkisi Nkondi and give an assurance that they have no intention of harming each other, e.g.: "Now that we have separated, if I should set a snare in the day-time or in the night-time, should I then not die?" All the conditions that are agreed upon may, to be permanent, be made before Nkondi. If the wife is very sickly, she is often taken home to her kanda. When she is well again she returns to her husband. If, on the other hand, she does not get well, this may lead to divorce.

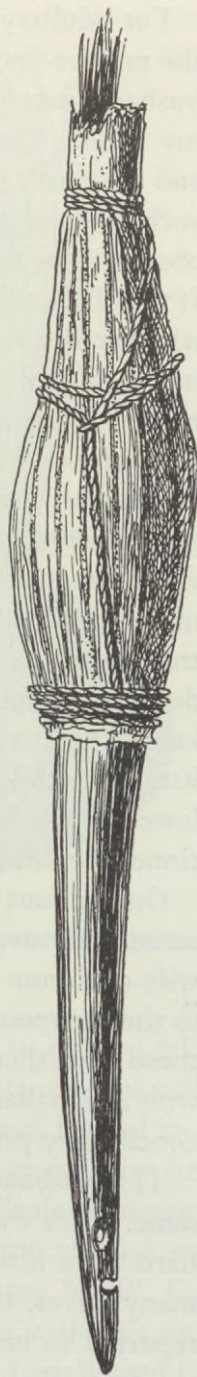


Fig. 8. Whisk for a nzonzi, Bembe in Kolo (Laman 574).

For adultery a man does not discard his wife, unless it is committed too often. But she may be fined for *kipinga* (i.e. if the intercourse took place on the bare ground). The husband may pay for minor offences that his wife has committed without informing her *kanda*. If this happens several times, however, he takes his wife to her brothers, and the result may be divorce, or else the brothers have to pay the fine. The offence in such cases is generally a matter of lying, thieving or the like, or she has perhaps not observed the various prohibitions connected with the preparation of food and so forth. If the offence is of a more serious kind recourse is had to the chief, who will then decide whether she is to be sold or executed. If the husband is very attached to his wife he may help her to pay in a court case. After his death, however, his *kanda* will take the matter up again to recover the goods from the wife's *kanda*.

In case of divorce, a circumstance that is often taken into consideration is the number of children that have been born; if there are several children, sometimes only half of the presents given for the bride need be returned. If the husband has no obviously valid cause for the divorce, the repayment will be less. After the divorce the husband makes chalk-marks on his wife's brow and temples as a token of the fact; in some tracts *nkula*-red is used instead. Sometimes the father may retain custody of the children during his lifetime; in this case, however, he must give presents to his wife and to her *kanda*. After the divorce the husband remains with his *kanda* and the wife returns to hers. The children belong to her and to her *kanda*, but grown-up sons may also be allowed to live in the father's village if the father is still alive and friendly relations continue to exist.

On account of the *kivila* the marriage implies that no new family in the proper sense is formed, but the husband constitutes a party entering from his *kanda* and the wife one from hers. If the love between them is not too deep, each will hold firmly to the viewpoints of his or her own *kanda*, which occasions all sorts of difficulties, and these must then be unravelled so that the culprit may be able to placate the other party with a conciliatory gift, to reinstate peace and concord. To forgive without receiving a conciliatory present is an unknown concept.

The husband is the master in his own house, he tells his wife what work he wants done. If his wife should prove to be a cleverer worker than himself and also wiser, it is hard for a husband to love her, for she should be mild, docile and humble. If he has many wives, they must all obey him. If one of them does not do so, the culprit is reported to her brothers for divorce or settlement. If the brothers have no goods to pay back, they take with them a goat or a pig as a placatory gift and go to reunite their sister with her husband. She is then strictly warned not to offend again. If such a disobedient and rebellious wife was married to a chief, she was as a rule beheaded and the body was placed in water to rot, after which the cranium was recovered and set up at the entrance to the chief's court.

In matters of minor importance, if the husband is angered he will show this by refusing to eat the food prepared by his wife. She is then saddened and tries to placate

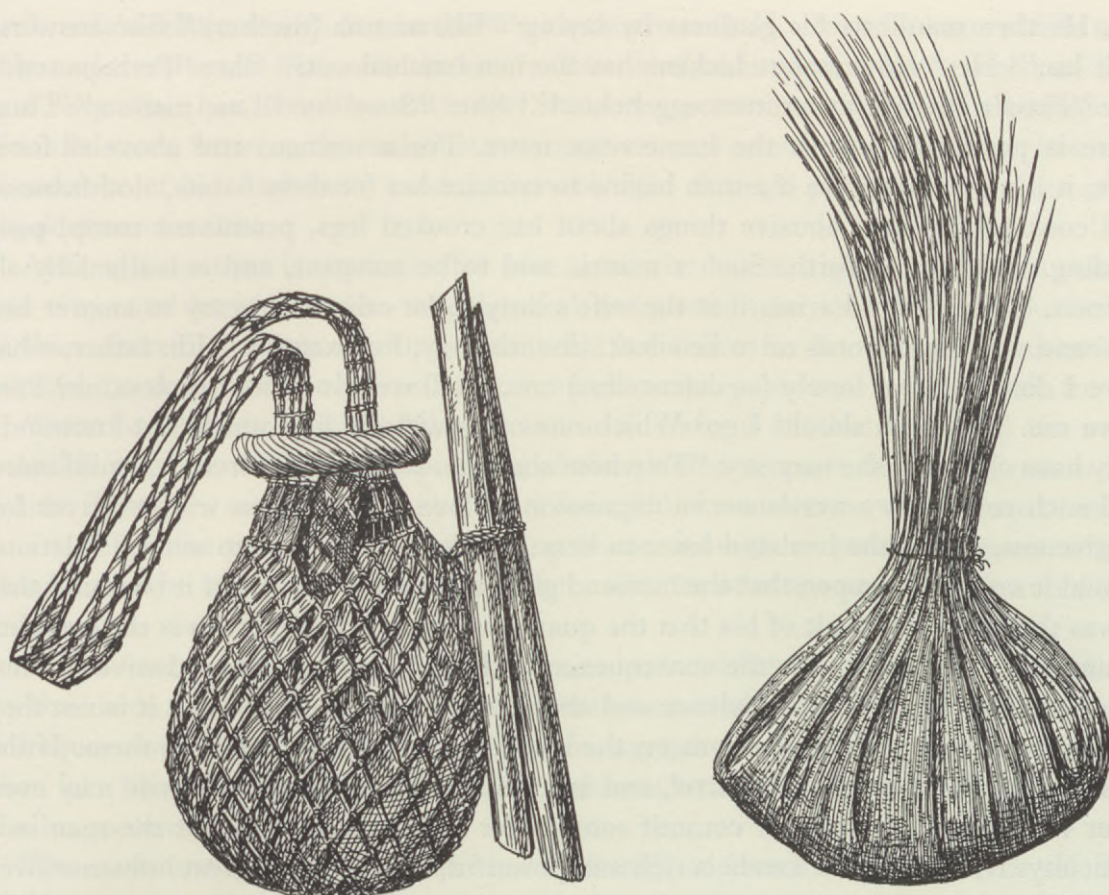


Fig. 9. A, *Nkisi Mpanzu* ("female"), *Sundi in Lolo* (Laman 1173). B, *Nkisi Mbundu*, *Sundi in Kinkonzi* (Laman 1177).

him with a good yuuma-dish with fish in it. If despite this he refuses to eat and tells her to go home to her kanda, her brothers come after a time and try to placate him with hens and other presents. In this case the wife then returns. What is most hateful to a husband if he quarrels with his wife is for her to stamp her feet, swing round, turn her rump towards him and insult him with gestures and smackings with allusions to parts of his body, especially his genitals, using infamous language, e.g.: "Come and lick my behind! May you go into my behind and come out of the crown of my head!" Or: "Lick your mother! Plant (i.e. bury) your mother alive! She is a bitch with grinning teeth, swollen eyes, scarred brow and crooked legs." Such abuse must be followed by divorce.

The husband may also become angry and revile his wife, saying for example: "Lick your dead mother, your dead father and others who have disappeared and are scattered." This is also a serious offence. But if he strikes her with his fists and she weeps and says: "Kill me then, kill me then!" and refrains from abusing him, his wrath subsides and he stops striking her. He becomes mild and ready for reconciliation with a gift of hens

etc. He then manifests his gladness by saying: "Eh, maama (mother)." She answers: "Eh laa."¹ He: "How many chickens has the hen hatched out?" She: "Perhaps ten." He: "Hasn't she left any rotten egg behind?" She: "Sure" or "Laa, just so." Then there is peace and joy in the home once more. For a woman, and above all for a wife, it is a great disgrace if a man begins to criticize her for dirty habits, slothfulness, bad cooking and says abusive things about her crooked legs, prominent rump, protruding teeth and so forth. Such a man is said to be arrogant, and is loathed by all women. When discord arises it is the wife's duty to be calm and to try to answer her husband with mild words or to be silent. She may say, for example: "Eh, father, what have I done? I, your lonely (= defenceless) one. Shall we not honour each other? Preserve me. To whom should I go? Which one of us will die first we do not know." If they have children, she may say: "To whom shall you send the children?" A mild voice and such conciliatory words are an expression of love and devotion with a prayer for forgiveness, which the husband loves to hear. When an enquiry into marital relations is held it may well happen that the husband gives a placatory present if it be found that it was through some fault of his that the quarrel arose, for the one who is the occasion of any evil must answer for the consequence of this. Desperate and hard wives do not give way, but may use both violence and abuse, since they are aware that it is not they who have wasted their possessions on the man, but he who has paid for them. If the husband is the cause of the quarrel, and is unreasonable and hard, the wife may even offer violence to her child or commit some other act of violence to put the man in a difficulty. If, further, her kanda is rich and powerful, she will have great influence over her husband.

Bought wives or slaves stand in a still more dependent relation to their husband and owner, who need not, however, be the same person. The chief watches over his subject families and sees that peace and concord are maintained. He may punish the culprit, where discord arises, as severely as he wishes.

At the chief's court the principal wife (nkama), and in other families the best loved wife (kundi), will occupy the most important position. This she attains to through her peaceable disposition, her industry, her good food and her modesty. She must excel her fellow-wives in all these respects. A paramount chief may choose three or four nkama from among his wives. The others are called mbanukunu a nkutu (hanging up of the provision-bag) for they are old and do not procure much food. They are not honoured and must live in very poor houses. The nkama has a certain authority over the other wives, and is frequently severe and hard in several respects. A nkama may not be addressed in an improper way, she may not joke with other men, and may above all not commit adultery, or she will soon be degraded. She may also be degraded for quarrelsomeness and other bad habits. If this takes place many persons will assemble and her husband will take mbwa za kyenga (fruit of the kyenga-tree) and strike her in the back with it. This is tantamount to a curse, and hereafter she is a mbanukunu a nkutu.

¹ Interjection as expression of politeness: "Yes please".

A wife's relations with her husband's kanda are only of a friendly nature. She may joke and romp as she likes with the sisters of her husband and with her brothers-in-law, and they with her likewise, which may, however, sometimes lead to illicit relations. Such relations between the makanda are sometimes not punished. A wife never becomes a member of her husband's kanda otherwise than through purchase as a slave or in liquidation of a debt.

Although the man is master in his own house, he has no right to his wife's things, her crops and harvest, and he may therefore not go and take what he wants. But he has a share therein, for it is his duty to buy for her a hoe for her tilling. In return for what she makes from her harvest she receives bananas, palm-nuts and meat etc. for the common household. These small gifts to the wife are of another kind than the more valuable presents of hens and portions of slaughtered animals that are given to her kanda. These are recorded with knots in a string, for in connection with future presents in return on the occasion of thanksgiving feasts, funerals or possibly divorce everything must be taken into account so that the balance of assets and liabilities on either side may be seen.

The wife and her kanda do not punish the husband for adultery, this is meted out by the kanda of the woman with whom he has committed the offence. If the husband is a frequent offender in this respect, his wife may get weary of him and her brothers then take her away, but they must in this case return to him the goods he has given for the longo-marriage.

The man must maintain and look after his family, and must see to it that his wife and children have something to cover their nakedness and have something to cover themselves with at night. He encourages his wife by giving her all sorts of ornaments, e.g. arm-rings and foot-rings, and glass beads of different kinds. He must build a special house for his wife, especially if the family has increased in number. If he has several wives, each must have a house of her own. Sometimes the wives live in their villages, according to the conditions of the marriage settlement, and in this case he lives for a period with each of them. The one he loves most and lives with gets the best house; the others, who are less popular, often get very poor houses. If a wife falls ill, it is her brothers' duty to see that she is visited by a nganga and cured by the latter. In many cases she will then be removed to her own kanda and nursed by her mother, if the latter is still alive. If the husband is very fond of his wife, however, he may nurse her himself, and see that she gets all the help she needs. As he is the brother-in-law of his wife's brothers it is incumbent upon him to be their friend and helper in any court cases, war and so on. In the majority of cases the respective makanda of the husband and of the wife have concluded binding contracts of friendship, but the man cannot be received into his wife's kanda or become a member of her mvila.

As a father he has authority over the children, especially the boys, whom he must teach to tap palm-wine, set traps and so forth as well as those other tasks which a man must perform. He is much loved and respected by his offspring. When they are grown

up and have families of their own they must reverence their father and give him the presents that are his due. A son, for example, will give palm-wine and the *ntima* of any game he has killed, while a daughter gives food etc. Then they will be followed by their father's blessing. If the husband has no children, his paternal rights and everything pertaining thereto will of course lapse.

A wife must obey her husband and perform the work that is required of her. She has a right to her own belongings and to the fruits of her work, the ground crops and the yield from her domestic animals. As regards the daily household economy, she will take of what belongs to her and the husband will take of what belongs to him (e.g. bananas, palm-wine and meat). A wife also retains her rights and her obligations in relation to her own *kanda*. Thus she visits her eldest brother and other relatives, prepares food for them and also makes them other presents. It is not incumbent upon her to procure all the food for her husband, he must also make his contribution, amongst other things by growing bananas, hunting and fishing. He, too, has his *kanda* to see to; and from his sisters he receives gifts of food. The main meal that the wife has to prepare is eaten in the evening, when the male members of the family come together with the other men in the village at the common eating place or at home. At most of the other meals the husband must roast his maize and prepare his palm-nuts etc. as he likes, for his wife is then working in the field. A wife who is wise and who is fond of her husband will try sometimes to prepare the very best food for him. He rewards his wife's love with gifts of fine cloths, rings and beads, whatever she may like.

During the first part of their lives it is the mother who cares for and fosters her children. When they become older she devotes special attention to the girls, who must learn to grow crops and perform other tasks falling to the lot of the female. The mother is revered and respected with love and devotion, but not with the fear and reverence that is due to the father. This is on account of his "paternal rights" and consequent "paternal power" through which he may harm and curse the children. The mother could not harm her own children, whom she alone "owns", and she is accordingly not made the object for the same reverence and cult as is the father in the ancestor cult.

Children should obey their parents and should above all show respect for their father; their mother they love for the care and love she has always shown. Both sons and daughters remain with the parents until they marry. The son lives preferably with the father, if the latter is domiciled in another village than the mother. If he marries, the son may, as an older man, also live in the married men's house in the village. If the children do not show the obedience due to their parents the latter may disinherit them through *kandu*-prohibitions. If, on the other hand, a son is very obedient, the father may buy him a gun, and this he may keep after his father's death. The children must, however, not only obey their parents, but also the latter's *makanda*, not least the father's, for if the father dies, his *kanda* will assume his rights.

The mutual relations between the children are marked by the deepest and tenderest love. A brother, for example, will sacrifice everything for his sister, he loves her more

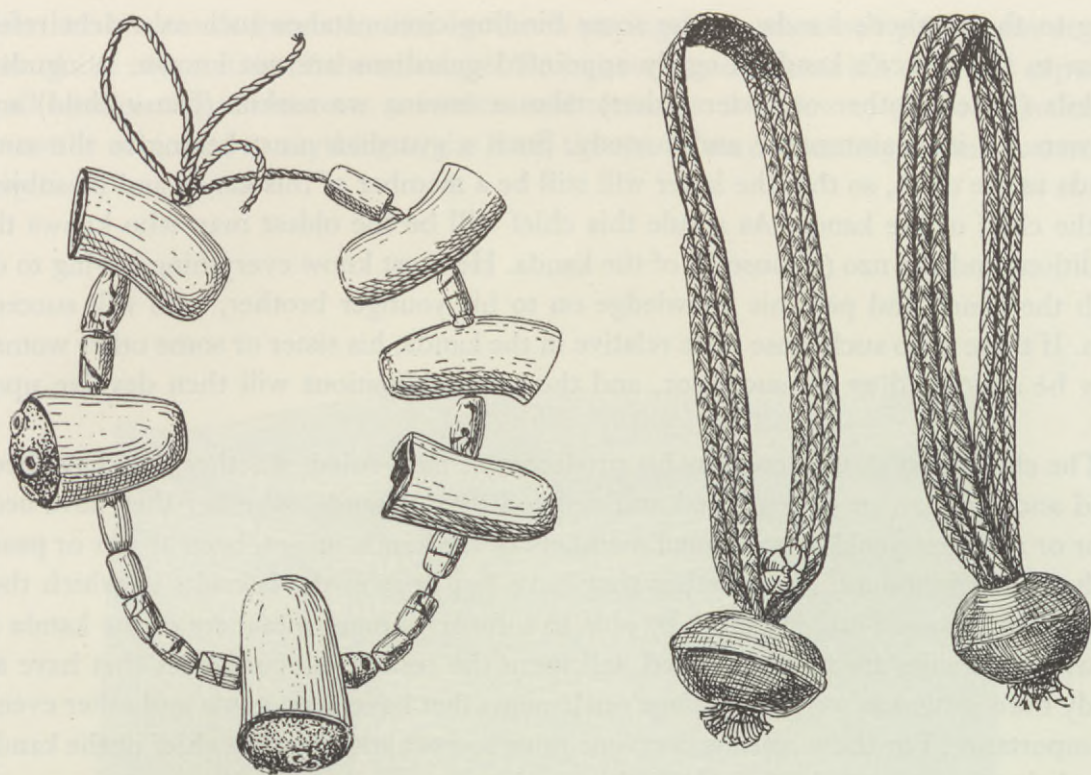


Fig. 10. A, Neck-amulet (*nkaku*), Sundi in Mayombe (*Laman* 532). B, Bracelet for a *nganga* (*ngongo za Nakongo*), Sundi in Mukimbungu (*Laman* 591).

than his wife, for the latter belongs to another *kanda*. In case of need, a brother will not hesitate to shoot a person for his sister's sake. The children always belong to the mother's *kanda*, whose rights are watched over by a maternal uncle. If the latter dies he is succeeded in this function by his sister's son. A *ngudi a nkazi* (maternal uncle) therefore likes his daughters and sisters to marry and give birth to children who may be his heirs.

A father cannot sell his child, for he does not own it, provided it is not a *nzimba*-child, i.e. a child whose mother has been bought. There may also be other circumstances in which he may own the child. If a maternal uncle gets into a difficulty in connection with some lawsuit, he may take one of his sister's children and leave it as a pledge with some rich person or sell it. That the mother and her *kanda* own the child is due to the fact that the mother has carried it as a *fœtus*, has given birth to it, given it food, cared for it and fostered it. She therefore feels the deepest pain and longing in connection with her child and is consequently the one who should own it. If the mother has been bought, her children and grandchildren belong to her owner. Many such children are, however, regarded as belonging to the *kanda* and are incorporated with this; they are then considered to be freeborn.

After a divorce or when one or other of the parents dies, the children of course be-

long to the mother's kanda, unless some binding circumstance such as a debt refers them to the father's kanda. Legally appointed guardians are not known. A ngudi a nsakila (foster mother or foster father) takes a mwana wa nsakila (foster child) and answers for its maintenance and custody. Such a guardian must belong to the same kanda as the child, so that the latter will still be a member of this kanda and be subject to the chief of the kanda. As a rule this chief will be the oldest man who knows the traditions and the nzo ("houses") of the kanda. He must know everything having to do with the kanda and pass his knowledge on to his younger brother, who will succeed him. If there is no such close male relative in the kanda, his sister or some other woman may be appointed as his successor, and the same obligations will then devolve upon her.

The chief must thus know how his predecessors have ruled, whether they have been mild and popular, or ill-tempered and disliked by the kanda, whether they have been poor or rich, have sold or redeemed members of the kanda or not, been at war or peace with their neighbours, and whether they have lost or won the lawsuits in which they have been involved etc. He must be able to inform younger members of the kanda as to which lawsuits are not yet settled, tell them the results in court cases that have already been settled as well as marriage settlements that have been made and other events of importance. For these reasons everyone must respect and obey the chief of the kanda, who helps his subjects in their difficulties and is their spokesman.

On this account, too, his successor must accompany him to all lawsuits and negotiations, besides watching over the latter's interests, seeing to it that the work in the field, hunting and fishing, and other occupations are all performed with due order and with great profit for the chief. This is what the chief will require of his younger brother; in return, he takes care that everybody gets food and that the kanda's possessions are preserved and put to the best possible use. If the brother should neglect his duties, calumniate or betray the chief and perhaps even seduce his wife, the chief will curse him and issue a kandu-prohibition, so that the brother will forfeit the regency. One who is popular in the kanda will then become its chief and inherit everything from his predecessor, even his widows.

Widowerhood or widowhood does not change the position or rank in the kanda so much. If the deceased wife was a party to a longo-marriage, then her brother, for example, must give another of the woman in the kanda as compensation, or must pay back the presents received in connection with the contraction of the marriage. If the children are still of a tender age when the mother dies, they are taken care of by a sister or a mother in the kanda who is able to maintain them. One or several boys may be allowed to stay for a while with the father to be trained and taught, if the mother's kanda approves of this. Other goods and chattels are inherited by the brother and the bisikanda of the deceased. If the husband dies, his widow is still subject to the kanda of her brother-in-law or the deceased, and may consequently be inherited by him or another legitimate heir when the period of mourning is at an end, unless she is separated

from her husband's kanda by her brother's paying back what was paid down at the time of the contraction of the marriage. To honour the deceased his widow is exposed to all sorts of very severe tests, privations and torments. A widower, on the other hand, cannot be subjected to anything of the kind, though he may voluntary submit to certain privations.



Fig. 11. Basket (mpidi), Bembe in Kolo (Laman 936).

CHAPTER III

Family Relations

That family relations among the Kongo and Sundi are entirely different from those obtaining in Europe appears from, *inter alia*, the *mvila* (clan names), which are preserved through the ages. All who have the same *luvila*, whether they live in the original home of the *kanda* or in remote villages are *mpangi* ("whole brothers"), they thus spring originally from the same mother. This means that if a native captures a person, finds a child or meets a stranger having the same *luvila* as himself, no harm is done any of these, but they are helped and cared for, since they are "brothers". The father and his *kanda* are given only secondary consideration, and only for the sake of the father's begetting. Apart from this, they would be referred to the class of unknown persons or enemies (*batantu*). The father and his *kanda* thus occupy a special position, carrying obligations, not only in this life, but also after death; and it is on this ground that ancestor worship has arisen.

The family relation among the Kongo and Sundi is thus a relation between two *makanda*, where the mother plays the main role, as the maintainer of the name of the *kanda*. The children, too, belong to the mother's *kanda*. The father, again, must belong to another *kanda*, he has his definite rights (*kitaata*). The family is thus a *kanda*-family, which is born of the same mother, grandmother, great grandmother (*nkaaka*) and so forth. The terms *nzo* (house, family) and *mooyo* (life, womb) refer to a family group deriving from a certain mother (*ngudi*) and thus representing a branch of the *kanda*. The names of these *ngudi* are considered to be the first *mvila* names existing when the clan system began.

A relation (*kikutu*) is a person from another *kanda* with which a native has become related by marriage. Among such are thus accounted all who stand in an in-law relationship (*mako*, *bazitu*) or a relationship by marriage (*banzadi*, *bankwezi*) to one another. The father's children are called *baana ba mbuta* (those born in his *kanda*). A Sundi reckons himself as a brother (sister) to all Sundi, and is related to the *kanda* or *makanda* with which he is allied by marriage. Other *tuvila* are regarded as strangers or enemies. The following instance may be given. Suppose in the course of a war someone cries: "Father Mazinga, I am your grandchild, Nsundi is the *luvila* mother



Fig. 12. A, Sculpture of an ancestor, Bembe in Kolo (Laman 623). B, Sculpture of an ancestor, Bembe in Kolo (Laman 637). C, Nkisi Mpodi, Sundi in Kingoyi (Laman 1289).

was born in, I am a free-born member of the luvila Nkumba. Who will shoot me?" Those belonging to the Mazinga cannot shoot a child born in their luvila (mwana mbuta). Those belonging to the Nsundi cannot shoot their grandchild, for the mother was born in the luvila; and those belonging to the Kinkumba may not kill their brother.

This relationship is indicated thus, for example: "Mono mfumu (master) Kinanga, ntekolo (grandchild) Kinlaza na funu Kibwende."¹ Through the mvila are elucidated the complicated relationships obtaining, for to this belong the characteristic pronouncements (nsasa, ndumbudulu, ntangumunu) which indicate, inter alia, the origin of the luvila, its ramifications (descendants) and its relation to other tuvila. To designate the

¹ That is: "I am a free-born of Kinanga, my father belonged to the Kinlaza, coming from Kibwende (my mother was born in Kibwende)."

clan the terms *mvila* and *kanda* are used. *Kanda* (plural *makanda*) refers as a rule to the lineage (on the maternal side) or the group in which one takes interest and with which one lives. The term may, however, also refer to a clan in its entirety, an ancestral clan, tribe or race; in northern dialects *kifumba* is used in the same sense. *Kanda* in the sense of tribe and race is used e.g. when one speaks of *kanda dya balwangu*, *dya basundi* and so forth; but these belong to many *mvila*. One says also *kanda dya bandombe* (the black race).

Mvila (singular also *luvila*) is properly speaking a designation for the proper name of the clan and also for the clan itself, whether it is a matter of the ancestral clan or its descendants with their new names. The context indicates in each case whether *mvila* refers to the name or the clan.

The natives frequently use both *kanda* and *mvila* to refer to clan: "*Makala wabakala mvila kwa mvila zazoo*", or "*kwa makanda mamoo*".¹ But on the other hand there is a certain difference between the two words, as emerges from the following pronouncement. "Just as there is a difference between *kanda* and *mvila*, so is there also between their chiefs. The *kanda* chief is master of the *kanda* from *nkaaya* (the ancestral mother) and the ancestors who built up the *kanda* with their *mbutani* (fertility) and who have regulated all good and bad processes. The *mvila* chief does not love and rule over the *mvila* as his own *kanda*, for he accepts bribes and sells and scatters the people in his own *mvila*. If he wishes to marry off one of its members he may act as he likes, but not, on the other hand, with his sisters of the same *kanda*. He cannot like members of the *mvila* as he can his own *kanda*, of which he is master." From this it appears that *kanda* refers to a part of the *luvila*, the part of it in which he is most interested.

A *mvila* chief is crowned on a leopard-skin, but a *kanda* chief remains in the *kanda* and is uncrowned. The *mvila* chief has consequently greater power than the *kanda* chief, for he rules over the whole tribe, he demands unconditional obedience and may execute whomsoever he will. The *kanda* chief has no such power. He may only execute one who is of his own *nzo* and who is subject to his own personal rule.

Another difference may be adduced. A person may be of the same *mvila* or have the same *mvila* name, yet not be of the same *kanda*. If I belong to the Kimbenza, I may marry off my sisters who are in my *kanda*, but another member of the Kimbenza tribe may not marry off my sister, nor may I marry off his sister, although it is a matter of the same *mvila*.

They are of the same *kanda* who have had mothers and grandmothers in common for two or three generations. This is *kanda*'s origin. *Mwana kanda* (a child in the *kanda*) and one in the *mvila* are also different from each other. The former may do as it pleases in matters concerning the *kanda* in which it was born. A child in the *mvila*, on the other hand, may not borrow goods from the fathers of the *mvila*, for it is not a child in the same *kanda*.

¹ "*Makala* gave the clan name to all clans", or "to all ancestral clans (families on the maternal side)".

Further, it is said: "Those who belong to the kanda are those who have come from one and the same mother. When her children are grown up and have given birth to grandchildren, the kanda has multiplied and there will be a new nsenga (progeny) or mbandu (generation) of four, five or perhaps six removes. They belong to the same kanda." When a kanda has multiplied so much it is often divided up at home in the village into "branch-families". These are designated with the terms nzo, mwelo a nzo (house, house-door) or mooyo, vumu and yimi (life, pregnancy). From these ngudi there then proceed new branches of the kanda. All, however, derive from the same nkaaka (ancestral mother). Hence the proverb: "Nkento ukabanga zingudi."¹ Kanda and mvila (the clan name) may not be separated. "As it was ordered from the beginning so should it remain eternally." The natives therefore say: "Kanda i sinsi dya bantu diatuuka mu ngudi mosi ya ntama beni beni."²

Persons are related with the father through marriage, i.e. they are children who are born of the same father but different mothers. Those who are born of the same kanda are called bibutu (relations on the father's side), zimpangi (brothers and sisters on the father's side) or mpangi za nzaabani kise (who know one another through the paternity). Kibutu thus designates not kanda or mvila, but nkumbu za kimbutani (name of the reciprocal birth-giving in the different makanda). Those who belong to the kanda are called mfumu ("the free-born ones") of the kanda and in relation to the father's kanda they are called "this kanda's children" (baana) and "grandchildren" (ntekolo).

Originally there was only one family (sinsi dya bantu), whose ngudi became the nkaaka of the children in all succeeding generations. These family names are called bingudi (maternal names). Then it became law that none might espouse his "sister", and the different bingudi therefore received the mvila, so that for the future the makanda might be distinguishable. For this reason the mvila are now retained, generation after generation.

Through the mvila there arose several tuvila with different nkaaka, and through the increase and spreading of the population new branches of the makanda. Through the mottoes of the mvila, however, it is possible to ascertain the origin of the tuvila and the inter-relations between them. Thus, for example, Maa MUMBA (mother MUMBA) is the nkaaka of the now known oldest tuvila Nanga and Nzinga (which are "brothers and sisters") and Nkundi etc. Maa NANGA emerged with four breasts from a hollow baobab-tree. She gave birth to four daughters, who became the first nkaaka of the tuvila. One of them, Maa NSUNGU, gave birth to three others, named Maa VUZI, Maa KUKULA and Maa NZUZI. To the mvila is generally added the name of the nkaaka, i.e. Vuzi dya Nsungu, Nkukulu Nsungu and Nzuzi a Nsungu. These were at first designated as nzo, but were later, after the increase of the families, regarded as ngudi for coming des-

¹ "Woman separates families."

² "Kanda is the people's root, which has its origin in one and the same mother in a distant past."

cendants, who then assumed new mvila. The traditions show also that new nkaaka and new mvila arise according to as the tuvila spreads out.

It is difficult to determine the significance of the oldest mvila, but a certain guidance may be got from the explanation of the names in later periods. Nanga and Nzinga, for instance, are considered to refer to a couple of snails, the former with a bulging shape (nangama), the latter spiral (zingama). Nsaku is now considered to refer to a broad, hoed road, but, like Nlaza, it is probably connected with lustful, rich and fruitful. Later mvila are interpreted in accordance with the significance of the word whence the name derives, e.g. "Kibingi wabinga tiya" and "Mbenza mbenzanga ntu mya bantu".¹

That the mvila system in the Congo should have any connection whatsoever with totemism does not emerge from the material. That e.g. Nanga and Nzinga refer to snails is doubtless symbolic for wealth, since these were formerly used as a currency. The myths of the creation of the world and the origin of the tuvila do not confirm such an assumption either. Certain animals (binkonko) are, certainly, mentioned; but these are not totem-animals, although a few of the younger makanda, such as the Mboma (the python kanda) has been named after them. The chief who took the name whence the kanda name came had the mboma as his kinkonko (guardian animal). It has already been pointed out that the leopard enjoyed great prestige and was accounted a fellow-prince of the paramount chief; but no kanda derives from the leopard. The varan-lizard (mbambi) may be observed in rock-drawings, tattooings and in the patterns of mats and textiles.² From this is derived a younger kanda name, Mbambi; probably the varan-lizard was its kinkonko.

The origin of new mvila names may vary. Frequently it is a certain quality or event, it may be a divorce or a war that is to be commemorated. Thus, for example, it is related of the Sundi that when they were leaving Ntandu (at Boko Songo) on account of the great famine, intending to go to Banda Mputu, they called out to one another with cries of encouragement. But one answered: "Do you go on ahead! I shall wait and roast my potatoes!" They thereupon called him ME MAZILA (who waits). Another answered: "Yes, let us go, but I shall first cut up my mbaku-animal." He was given the name ME MBAKU LEMBA. Then they arrived at the next village, and called out: "Come with us!" One answered: "Yes, let us go, but I shall slaughter the pigs and roast the entrails for my wives, then I shall come." Then they said: "Stay behind, but your name is ME KANGU NA KANGA (roast)." They went on to another village and called out: "Let us go to Banda Mputu to rule!" One answered: "Let us go, but I shall make my nkisi Mpembo, as I am sick." They replied: "Stay behind! May your name be NAMPEMBO!" Then they went on. Thus all these makanda came from Mansundi. Other examples may be adduced.

Kiyombo is the name of a kanda at Yanga (west of Kinkenge), so-called because the

¹ "Kibingi who struck fire" and "Mbenza who decapitates people".

² One might imagine that the pattern represents a crocodile, but this is not the native's conception. In many places, for the rest, they do not know of the existence of the crocodile.

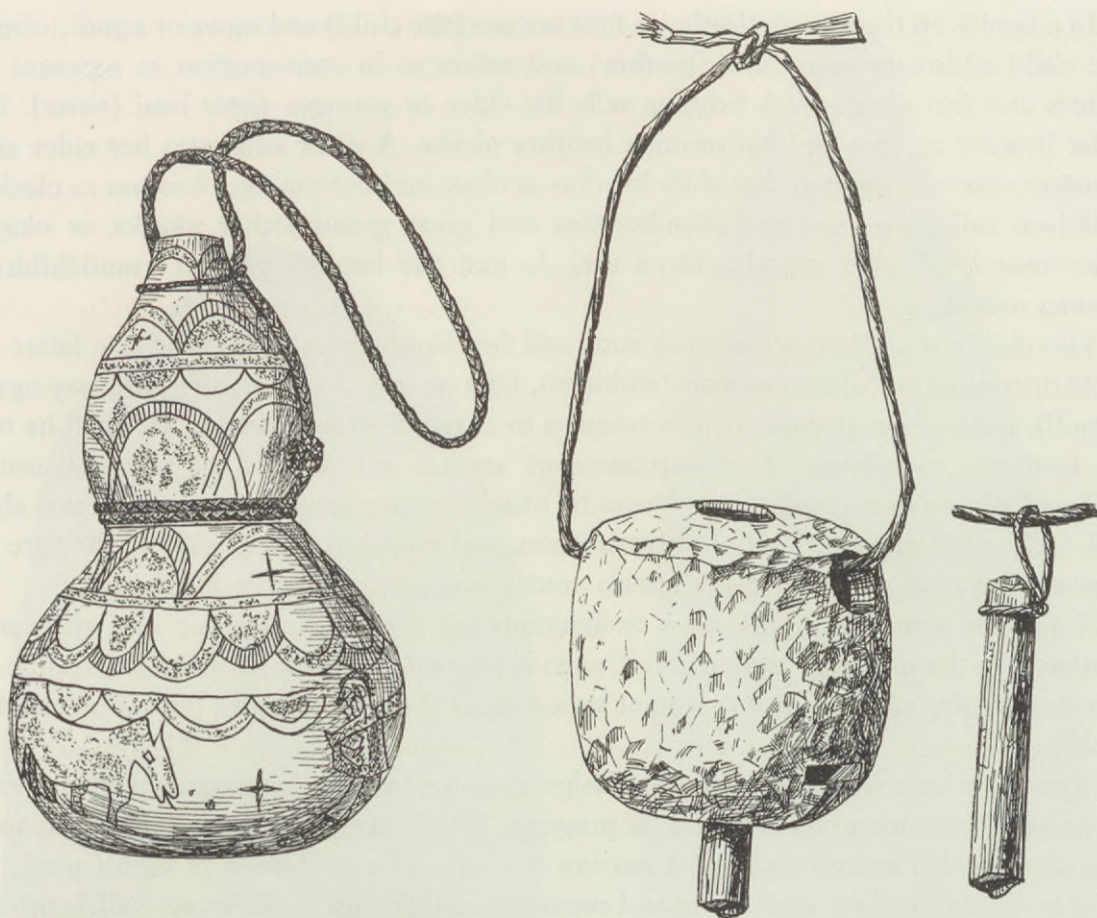


Fig. 13. A, Calabash (*mbinda yasomwa*), Sundi in Mukimbungu (Laman 332). B, Wooden pig-bell, Sundi in Mukimbungu (Laman 267).

members were so keen to hunt (*yombuka*). *Nsanda* is the name given to one *kanda*, because it settled on the bank of a river where the *Nsanda*-tree that had been planted by *Ngondo* (a supernatural being) grew among the rocks. The *Mbuku Sela* are a *Nsanda* people, but their chief assumed the name *MAMBUKU SELA*, whence the name of the *kanda*. The *Kinanga* belong to the *Kimbenza*, but as they settled on elevated (*nangama*) sites they were given their new name. When the *Kinsaku* slept on the *nsaku*-road they were called *Nsaku eleele* or *Nsaku Maleele* (from *laala* = sleep). The *Mankoko* (of *Mbenza*) took the name because they found a tree (i.e. a foot-bridge, *nkokolo*) upon which to cross the river at *Lukula*. *Makaba* was given his name *Mpanga* (from *vanga*, *vangula* = separate), because he allotted *mvila* names or because he "divided" himself. From the *Mbenza* came the *Mbenza Mayombe* group, who stayed in the *Mayombe* forest, the *Mbenza Mayanga*, who settled at the *Yanga* (swamp), the *Mbenza Mantene*, who settled on the *Ntene* river-bank, and the *Mbenza Makamba*, who stopped "just over" (*kambana*) the river.

In a family on the maternal side we find mwana (the child) and ngwa or ngudi, whom the child addresses as maama (mother) and refers to in conversation as ngwaani or mbuta ami (my mother). A brother calls his elder or younger sister busi (sister), his elder brother mfumu and his younger brother nleeke. A sister addresses her elder and younger sisters as mpangi, her elder brother as nkazi and her younger brother as nleeke. Children call their maternal grandmother and great grandmother nkaaka or nkayi. The former calls her grandchildren ntekolo and the latter her great grandchildren mwana ntekolo.

The children address a maternal aunt and her brothers as yaaya, and the latter in their turn call the children mwana (children). Of a maternal aunt the children say ngwa (ngudi), while the maternal uncle is referred to as ngudi nkazi, ngwa nkazi or, if he has no brothers, as mfumu. To the remove of several generations the maternal uncle will call his nephews and nieces baana ba nkazi. Female cousins on the maternal side call each other mpangi, older cousins mfumu and younger ones nleeke. If they are of opposite sexes the male calls his female cousin busi, and she calls him nkazi.

Nsakila is sometimes used as a designation for brother and sister or father and mother. On the northern bank of the Congo it refers as a rule to adopted children, e.g. mwana nsakila, adopted by a maternal aunt who is then called ngwa (ngudi or mbuta) nsakila.

Mpangi, which is now used as the designation for brother in general, was formerly restricted to the maternal side and its progeny. If it is desired to specify the kimpangi ("brotherhood") more exactly, the natives say mpangi a se dimosi ye ngudi mosi, to refer to whole brothers and sisters and mpangi a ngudi mosi to designate half-brothers and half-sisters. To distinguish the sexes they say mpangi a bakala (brother), and mpangi a nkento (sister). To designate age they say mfumu concerning the elder (yaaya or mpangi a mbuta south of the Congo) and nleeke concerning the younger. With reference to the right of primogeniture, they speak also of ndonga bayaaya, the eldest branch, i.e. progeny of the eldest daughter in the kanda. This right of primogeniture goes through all degree of the kanda.

The child addresses its father as taata, and generally refers to him as se dyami (s'aami). Paternal uncles and aunts and all their offspring are referred to as mase or bataata. On the maternal side they refer to themselves as bamfumu. The father calls his children baana (children), the grandfather calls his grandchildren batekolo (children's children). These call their grandparents nkaaka or nkayi.

A paternal aunt is also called se dya nsakila or se (taata) dya nkento. Progeny on the father's side may be called mpangi, because they are bampangi ba se dimosi or mpangi za nzabami kise ("brothers through the father"). If a ngudi a nkazi (maternal uncle) is married, the mwana nkazi may not refer to his uncle's wife as munzadi, but must say ngudi. If a mwana nkazi is married, the maternal uncle may not joke with his wife or call her munzadi, but must use the term munkwezi (buko, mother-in-law).

A husband (bakala), spouse (nlumi) calls his wife nkento (woman), nkazi (plural

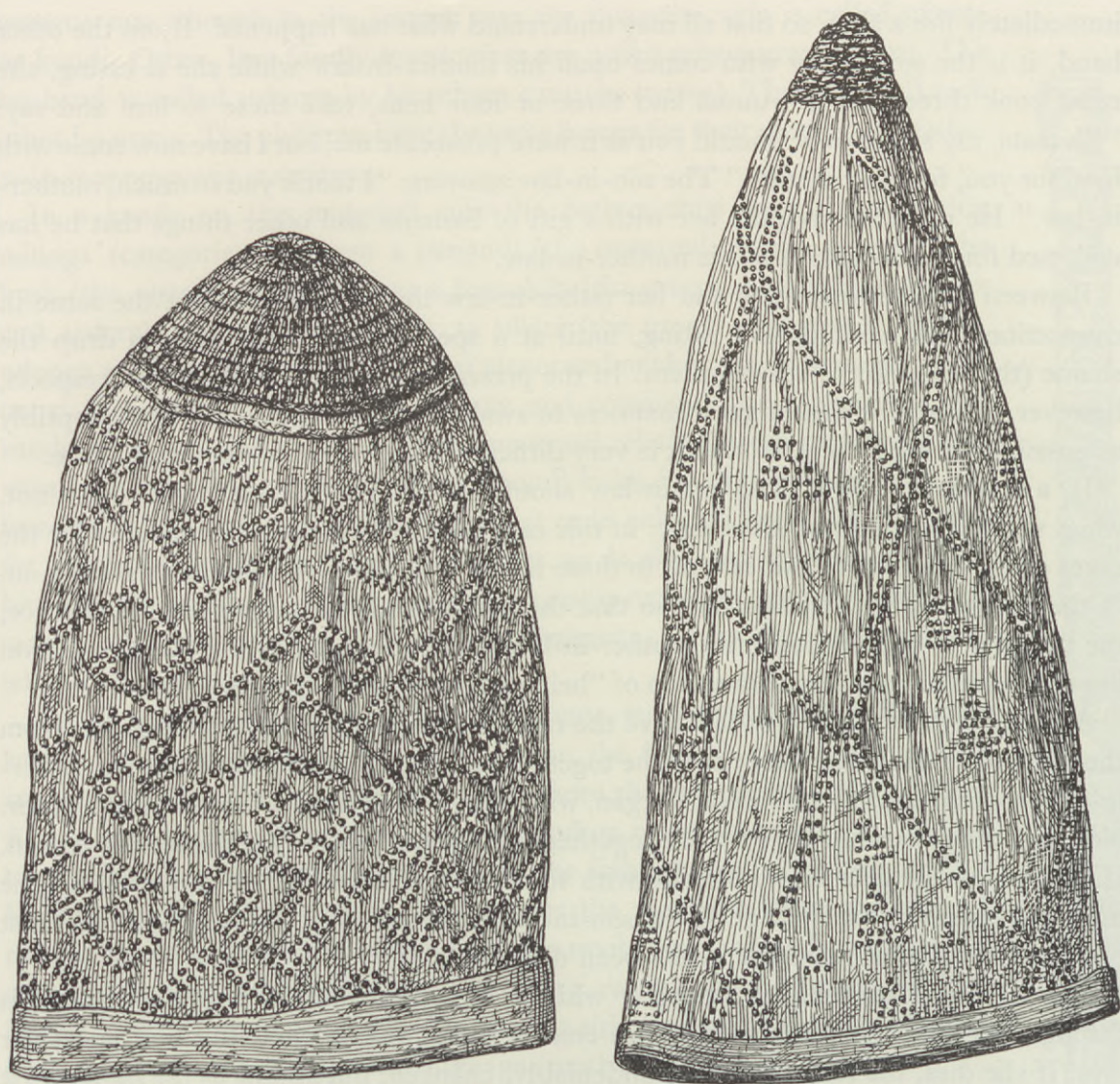


Fig. 14. A, Chief's cap (*mpu yakimfumu*), Sundi in Vungu (Laman 426). B, Chief's cap (*mpu yalubialu*, the cap is of *mbongo*-type), Sundi in Kibunzi (Laman 428).

bakazi, wives), or *nkama* (plural *bakama* or *makama*). The in-law relationship is rendered with *buko* or *buzitu* (dial. *bankwazi*). *Ko wami*, my mother-in-law (father-in-law), or my son-in-law (also wife of my son).

Among the many customs observed between in-laws may be noted the following. If the son-in-law should meet his mother-in-law on the road, he must rush into the grass and remain silent until she has passed. If it is his father-in-law that he meets they may pass the time of day. But if they meet at a watercourse they may neither bathe nor cross over together. Nor may they sit on the same mat. Mother-in-law and son-in-law may never eat together. If the former should meet the latter when he is eating, he must

immediately fire a shot, so that all may understand what has happened. If, on the other hand, it is the son-in-law who comes upon his mother-in-law while she is eating, she must cook three pots of yuuma and three or four hens, take these to him and say: "Eh taata, my son-in-law, should you as it were prosecute me, but I have now come with food for you, for your mouth." The son-in-law answers: "I thank you so much, mother-in-law." He must also requite her with a gift of bananas and other things that he has collected for the reception of his mother-in-law.

Between a daughter-in-law and her father-in-law the relation is about the same in connection with meeting and eating, until at a special feast they agree to drop the shame (the reverence) between them. In the presence of a person whom one respects, however, it is still a part of good manners to swallow as noiselessly and imperceptibly as possible during a meal, so that it is very difficult to see when this is taking place.

If a son-in-law or a daughter-in-law should be ill, the parents-in-law may not, when visiting them, enter the house; in this case the visitor must sit outside under the eaves or on the veranda and call out to those inside to ask how the patient is getting on. If the illness takes a serious turn, so that the patient's life is hanging in the balance, the tradition is ignored, and the mother-in-law goes in to help. When the sick person has recovered or died, the convention of "being afraid of each other" is resumed.

A father-in-law and son-in-law have the right to see each other, to eat together from the same plate. But they may not bathe together or see each other naked, for the father-in-law may not see his son-in-law's organ, with which the latter vindicates his daughter. Nor may they evacuate their bowels together, so that the son-in-law's posterior is seen. If the son-in-law gets into a dispute with someone and his father-in-law sees this, he must put a stop to the quarrel. If the son-in-law does not obey, his father-in-law must be placated, as their relationship has been disgraced.

The in-law relationship is strongest while the daughter-in-law is alive, since it is through her that the respective parties convey their desires, their troubles and their joys. If she dies, the relationship is, undeniably, changed; but as long as the parties to it are alive, the in-law relation does not die. The customs connected with the relationship are discontinued, however, if the wife gives birth to a girl who is given the name of her maternal grandmother. In this case the son-in-law must buy pork and send for his mother-in-law so that they may eat it together. The mother-in-law must kill a hen which she brings to her daughter's husband as thanks for the pork and as a token that they are to drop *nsoni* (the respect) that has obtained between them. After this the mother-in-law calls her son-in-law *taata*, and no longer *buko*, and the latter says *mwana*, or *maama* when he wishes to honour her. If a quarrel should arise with the parents-in-law which cannot be compounded, the son-in-law may both insult and strike his mother-in-law, an ordinarily unheard-of offence. Hence the proverb: "If you strike your mother-in-law, then strike hard."¹

In a polygamous marriage the husband and wives have the same names as in a mono-

¹ I.e. you will in any case have to pay a heavy fine.

gamous one, though in the former case the favourite wife is called nkama or kundi. Other, less fondly loved wives are called mbankunu a nkutu. The husband is called mfumu by his mbuta a muntu (wives). The latter call each other by name. The children have the same names for their mother and father as in monogamous marriages.

In a kanda on the maternal side the natives thus have the following ndonga (categories): ndonga a bangudi (the maternal group), ndonga a ba busi (the sister group), ndonga a bansakila (the group of younger brothers and sisters), ndonga a ba ngudi za nkazi (the group of maternal uncles), ndonga a baana bankazi (the group of nieces and nephews) and ndonga a bam-pangi (the group of brothers, sisters and cousins). The foundation of a kanda thus consists in the kingudi (maternal relation) from former nkaaka, nkazi and busi; and kimpangi (brotherhood) holds for all the progeny of different degrees in the maternal line direct or in collateral lines. Kitaata holds for the father and his brothers and sisters, as do also the rights belonging to him and his kanda as a father. Also other kinship-terms are used in transferred senses, apart from what they actually designate, e.g. in the in-law relation when nsoni is dropped.

As regards impediments to marriage, none may marry within the same kanda. If anyone wishes to marry within the father's kanda, the natives are anxious that the wife shall not come from the same kanda as the father. A man says in connection with yawning and on other occasions e.g.: "Mono taata Nlaza (his mvila) ntekolo Mazinga (the father born in Mazinga) nafunu Kinanga (the mother born in Kinanga or the mother's father mfumu Kinanga) mvila mbeedi yaa Kimumba (the mvila from which I come is Kimumba or mfumu Kimumba)." In more recent times the natives have begun to give more weight to the father's side, and say: "Nafunu Mazinga (father born in Mazinga) ntekolo Nanga (mother born in Kinanga).

A mother refers to or addresses her children as baana baami, her grandchildren as batekolo baami (from tekula, to ramify); in the third generation as ntekudila or ntekuluka (new ramification); in the fourth generation as ntekuzula (still another ramification) or in dialect as ndukudila (from lukula, to spread out); in the fifth generation as nsengo, or nsengo-progeny; for at this stage, sometimes, indeed, even earlier, new makanda are often formed. Slave children of the fourth generation are called tuvi twa nzimbu (progeny of the possessions). Also other names occur in dialects.

The children call their mothers maama, ngwami or yaaya, while the grandchildren and their offspring use the term nkaaka. Kisi Kinanga (the Kinanga kanda), in which the mother was born, and bisi Mazinga (the Mazinga-



Fig. 15. Chief's staff, Sudi in Mayombe (Laman 755).

ites), in which the father was born, are also called bankaaka. The children call also the mother's brothers and sisters yaaya. The children use taata and bataata also in addressing the father's brothers, sisters and whole kanda. Taata thus refers to the whole kanda on the father's side, and yaaya to the whole kanda on the mother's side, whether the members are male or female. The sexes are distinguished with bakala or nkento, e.g. taata dya nkento (paternal aunt).

The children address their eldest brother as mfumu (nkazi) and the sisters call the younger brother nkazi, but one another they address as mpangi. The brothers call their sisters busi, and the eldest brother calls the younger nleeke. The children also call the mother's brother mfumu.

When baana and batekolo are mentioned by these names in lawsuits or in other similar connections the implication is always that they are the father's children and grandchildren although they belong to the mother's kanda.

Nephews and nieces call their aunt ngwa. All sons-in-law and sisters-in-law call each other nzadi. In dialect also nkwezi (plural zikwezi). The term nzadi is used also in other cases. All the parties to an in-law relationship (parents-in-law, sons-in-law or daughters-in-law) call one another ko (plural bako or mako) or nkwezi.

Slavery originates from several causes. As a rule, a person with possessions will buy a wife in order to get good progeny. He will then buy men to serve as tappers of palm-wine or in some other capacity, and wives for these latter, provided that he himself has as many as he wants.

That people should be prepared to sell a member of their own kanda is due to several circumstances. Sometimes a person may be obliged to make such a sale to pay a debt or a fine, or because he has lost a pledge or security he has given in a lawsuit. Frequently, too, a person may be sold if he commits adultery very often, is an inveterate thief, a bully or a murderer. Formerly, moreover, many people would in case of famine be sold to regions where food was more plentiful, and the price would then be a few provisions. A free man, too, must sometimes pledge himself for a debt, and if his kanda cannot redeem him he will remain a slave. Prisoners of war or other captives also become slaves if their relatives cannot ransom them. When the slave trade was started at the coast, people were sold in exchange for guns, gunpowder and cloths etc.

A slave is generally called muntu ami by his master, who is in his turn called mfumu ami or taata. The bought slave is generally called nnanga, waayi, muntu wa nsumba (bought), muntu a nzimbu, muntu a mbongo (for whom one has paid much), or baana ba bula (children of the village). Other names, too, exist. In the north, to the west of Mpumbu, the Sundi and other tribes generally call their slaves bakongo, because they have bought them from the Kongo.

A good slave is treated more or less like other people in the village, but he is seldom admitted as a member in the kanda of his owner. He may thus not use the same kanda name as his master. A child born of a bought mother who is intelligent and who becomes a skilful nzonzi or something of the sort may be admitted as a member of the

kanda, and may even not infrequently become its chief. Slaves might sometimes be admitted to company with the more superior members of the kanda to relieve their busaana (solitude). The slaves are also called "the clearing up of the eyes again" for possessions "do not quarrel with each other".

The female slave and her children generally get a place of her master's farm; if they do well, however, they are allowed to form a section of the village for themselves and a nzo of their own. The children are then called baana ba nzo (children of the nzo), ba mfulu, ba lufulu (children of the locality), baana ba makunzi (children of the house-posts, i.e. those born on the property) or baana ba mbata ntu (children of the crown of the head) because the goods paid down were carried on the head.

The bought slave must work for his master, whether it is a matter of tapping palm-wine, hunting, fishing or other manly occupation; and his wife and children must perform the duties allotted to them. An account of all profits must be given to the slave-owner. If the slave is good at bargaining and at his work he may, to begin with, keep and use the property for his master's gain. If, though, he cheats in any way the severest punishment is inflicted, he will be executed or sold again.

The owner is entitled to do as he likes with a slave; but if the latter is exposed to injustices and severe outrages he may fly to another chief who is peaceable and kind, and lokila kunda (give himself into his protection and care). The slave must then as a rule swear an oath not to fly by some great nkisi. It is incumbent upon the owner to help the slave. If he likes him he must make him a trader, and if he does good business he must be praised as if he were free-born. The slave-owner thus relates what happens and treats him as if he were a free man. If a slave has been taken unjustly or through fraud he may be allowed to vulusa (free himself) even for nothing; but if, on the other hand, he has been taken for a crime or a debt a high price must be paid for his ransom.

As soon as a slave-family grows up, the father may, with his master's help (loan) procure wives for his baana ba nzo and others under his supervision. In case of marriage care is always taken to see that the parties are from separate makanda. If a man of a mwelo a nzo family marries a woman of the bakongo (the bought), the free must marry children of the bakongo and the latter must marry the free. The bakongo may intermarry if they come from different makanda.

In case of marriage the children always belong to the father or to the latter's mfumu. On the decease of the owner the baana ba nzo are inherited by the new owner who is the rightful heir. If the children are grown up they may sometimes be ransomed by the mother's kanda and move to her village, where they will be free (bamfumu). The same kanda names are used in the man's nzo as among the free.

A child may be born a slave if, for example, the father has died in the kanda from which his wife (the mother) has come, or if bankazi (brothers) who own their busi have not paid the nsamba (wedding wine etc.) that was meted out in connection with the longo-marriage and have not come to give a shroud for the corpse. These children must then be called minanga mina mene (slaves of to-morrow, i.e. of the future), since

there is in their kanda no spokesman who might speak in their behalf. If the father has not received his goods at the marriage, he shall at all events retain his children, but they are in this case not called minanga (slaves), but baana ba mbuta or ba makunzi (house-folk), since they have been born in the house, and not baana ba ntu. These may not be sold or given as forfeits in connection with lawsuits.

When the neighbours in a village belong to the same mvila and perhaps to the same kanda the relations between them are of the best, as they regard one another as brothers and sisters. They afford one another help wherever the need arises. If disputes should occur these are settled in the best possible way. If, on the other hand, neighbours should belong to different mvila, the relation is not the same, even if it may be rather friendly. Two separate parties are, however, constituted, and these may frequently have different interests and try to excel each other in number of children and general prosperity. If there is no relation of friendship, the one party will accuse the other of kindoki.

The various makanda believe that they have each descended from their respective ancestral father or ancestral mother, who in their turn descended from the first human beings, who owe their origin to Nzambi. They are thought to have descended from heaven. With a few exceptions (e.g., Nanga), there is nothing in the mvila, legends or narratives to indicate that these ancestors stand in any sort of relation to plants or animals, which are therefore not made the objects of any special cult. Different makanda and individuals, on the other hand, may ally themselves with certain animals (kin-konko) in order to assimilate their spiritual qualities. Such animals are revered and honoured, and they may not be eaten or profaned. Chief in this connection is the leopard, that is honoured and revered most. It is the protective patron and co-ruler of the kanda, and approves, for example, the pretender to the throne, who is, for the rest, crowned on a leopard skin. The genealogy of the chieftain families can only be studied in the traditions, in so far as these have preserved the names of the paramount chiefs.¹

When the children are grown up the sons frequently remain with their father in the village where he is domiciled, even if they marry. If the father dies, they go home to their own kanda. The daughters stay in their mother's village until they get married. Even then they may remain in the village, according to the kind of marriage they have concluded. In the majority of cases the husband lives in his village and the wives stay in their native villages. In the bigger villages there are also houses for both young unmarried women and unmarried men. When they get married a new household of their own is formed, even if the wife lives in her own village. In cases of polygamy, where the wives live in different villages or in the same village, each wife has her household with the husband when he comes to her to eat and live.

¹ I have several lists of chiefs from certain families in Mayombe, but as these are long and hard to check it has unfortunately been necessary to omit them here.

CHAPTER IV

Sickness

Illnesses are as a rule cured with a medicine given by a nkisi specially indicated for each case. Formerly, people are said to have become very old, and died not from illness but from old age. The infirm were carried out in the sun and given food. In old age they took new names to glorify their age, as for example NKUKU MWINDU (as old as the mwindu-tree), or NLAZI KAFWE (the plant of life does not die).

If a mother has sickly children—they may for example be weak in the legs—she gets a nganga to bless the broom with nkisi Muhingu. When she sweeps her house she must then also sweep away the child's legs and jump up and down crying: "Strength!" The child will then soon be able to walk. Sometimes sick children may be cured by putting a little cleft stick on their neck. The maternal uncle must then take the child with him into the courtyard, saying: "Who will buy this child?" The maternal or the paternal grandmother now says: "Bring it here and I will buy it." The uncle is given a little salt and the purchaser says: "Bought, I have bought. It is bought for pearls. It is sold." The one who has sold the child must now bless it with the words: "Twa wabinga (fare well). Be like the cricket that multiplies at the stone, that my possessions may sink down in the body." The little fork is left on the child's neck for a while, sometimes until the sickness is over. The cleft stick is a sign that shows that the child has been sold and is no longer with its kanda. Perhaps some member of the latter has been tormenting the child so that it might die. He can now no longer continue with this.

Some persons may fall in a faint when they hear about or see anything dangerous, e.g. in connection with hunting, on the road, when a buffalo breaks from the bush and so forth. They become quite weak and fall to the ground, and feel a stinging and a severe ache in the loins. Some are made to come to their senses with the help of hard blows or cold water. Sometimes one may be overcome with consternation, may be unable to hold his urine and get violent diarrhoea. This sometimes happens when hunters meet buffaloes. Women can, on the other hand, fight like the strongest man, and may even go to war.

General aches all over the body are cured by nkisi Mpodi's nganga and, as a rule, with cupping and sucking out of the living creatures that are biting or stinging the sick person. The nganga first puts all kinds of things, even snakes' heads, into the cupping

horn, to show what has been sucked out that has been "biting" in the body. If the patient is paralysed by the ache he gets beside himself and wants to take his life, as he will be sterile. The malaise is then treated with leaves, and if this does not help with *minkisi Kindyondyo* and *Ntaba*. A man may frequently become sterile if he falls down from a tree or if he treads on a medicine put in his way just for this purpose. One who is incapable of coitus is given constant treatment with *bakisi* such as *Masekola*, *Nziba*, *Kindyondyo* and *Kolo nkamba* (fig. 26).

The cause of aches accompanied by gradual wasting (*mayeela ma ntela*) to the point of changing the shape of the body must be ascertained by the *nganga's* smelling out of the trouble, so that he may know whether it is a matter of an ordinary illness or has been provoked by *bandoki*. In the latter case he must *siba* (invoke) *nkisi* so that they may drive out the *bandoki*.

In case of aching sinews at the back of the neck, where it is painful to look sideways, the *nganga* must take a *wele-straw* from an old mat on which someone has lain. He then takes a leaf of the rubber tree (*musanda*) and places this on the *wele-straw*, which is tied about the patient's neck.

Headache (*ntu tatika*) is often cured with cupping, bathing the whole face and head with hot water and massage of the sinews at the nape of the neck. It may also be cured with a medicine consisting of *lusaku-saku*, *nzo-pepper*, *luyala*, *nkiduku*, *ndimba* and ashes from inside the house. When this is ready the *nganga* lays the sick person on a *kunzi* log or *pisang* trunk, takes the medicine and dry *pisang* leaves in his mouth, exhorts them and spits on the lobes of the patient's ears and on his brow, saying: "*Makela* (the slanderer) his name is unknown, as is *Kimbimbi* (whose name on trees etc. is not known) in the forest. Treat it, I will treat externally, do not cause headache, not fever-heat". After this he may prepare a little medicine that the sick person is to wear with a string round his forehead; he says to him: "You must not let the medicine get wet, nor bend down at a watercourse on the forbidden day, nor may you eat fresh manioc or fresh peanuts together with others." One may also grind the leaf-plant *lukongi lwa ngulu* on a stone, burn it and mix it with gunpowder, after which the medicine is smeared in scores made in the skin. Further, headache may be cured by inhaling the sap of *nkefwa* leaves, by smelling the flowers of this plant or by using *minkisi Mbwanga*, *Mbuzi*, *Mayiza*, *Nakongo*, *Nkondi* or *Mvutudi* etc. If *nkisi Mayiza* is used, the *nganga* places two fingers on the right side of the *salu-bag* with the medicine-powder and his left hand on the crown of the patient's head, and lets the latter smell the medicine, which consists of, *inter alia*, *malemba-lemba*, *mansusu* and wormwood. At the same time he says three times: "Smell, smell, we do not smell." The medicine is then pulverized and drunk. For external treatment of the face leaves of *madyadya-grass* and a sort of stinging nettles are used, the face being sponged herewith. One who uses *nkisi Nkondi* must drink a powder of *ndimba-red* (*ndembo*). A *nganga* may make a drop-medicine for nose and eyes from the *lazi-herb* and *mansusu ma nkento*. The leaves are put in water and kept in a cornet of *nsafu-leaves* until they are to be used (fig. 21/2).

Mfindu-pimples and similar rashes may be held in cold water if they are between the fingers. After this one may crumble banana-leaves, mix with sparsely placed grains of maize and wipe on the affected part.

Wounds (mputa) inflicted with sharp-edged weapons are quickly healed as compared with other wounds if they are treated with powder of the nkaazu-tree and the ends of the grass used to thatch the house. Then the juice of bitter leaves, such as those of worm-wood, is poured on the wound. Further, powder from nkisi Mayiza may be used as well as ndembo from nkisi Nkondi and medicine-mixture from nkisi Nsansi and others.

Mpele or nkudu sores are a terrible disease that tends to spread over the entire body. The limbs ache and the body is enfeebled. The sores are washed with lemon-juice mixed with thick, pulverized, dark nsadi or makongo stone. The first sores indicating that the sick person is suffering from mpele are called zandu. The patient's house is moved to the side of the road leading to the village or otherwise out of the way. He may not sit or eat with those who are healthy, and if he must speak with a healthy person he should keep such a distance that scabs or matter from the sores will not fall on his interlocutor. When the sick man is covered with sores he must be cleansed from the disease three times and let them break out three times. When the disease is overcome the patient must give a token of gratitude and a reward to those who have washed him in the stream. As a rule this will consist of a pot of good food with fish or rats in it. If the patient is an elderly man who is able to work, he must buy himself a new loincloth. If it is a child or a woman, the kanda of the patient buys the loin-cloth. Everything that the sick person has used, e.g. baskets, dishes, spoons and bed, must be thrown into the water, and his hair must be shaved off and so forth. They then look for an ant-hill on which the cleansed man must set his foot. He must take a stick and poke a hole in the hill, so that the ants crawl all over him and bite him, but he is not allowed to scratch himself. When the ants have stopped biting the patient throws himself into the water, but he must go through the ant-hill cure three times before he is considered healthy and is permitted to eat and drink together with others.

Sores on the sole of the foot (ndadi or mabozya) are treated with herbal medicine that is dripped into the sore, or else resin from a tree is smeared on the same after the patient's feet have been thoroughly washed at the fire. No prohibitions need to be ob-

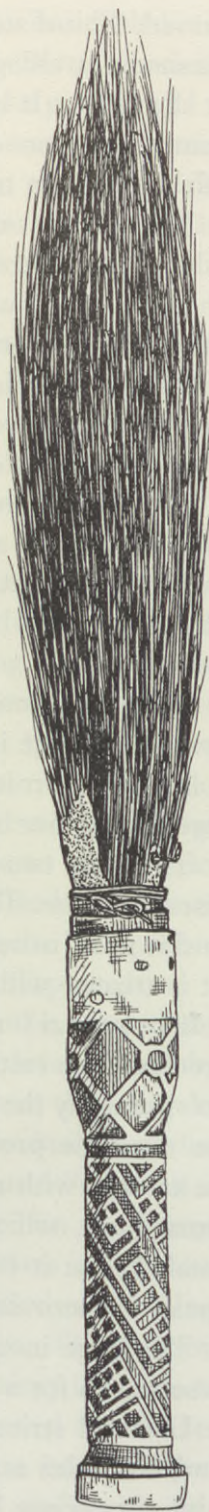


Fig. 16. Whisk for a nzonzi (mfunka), Sudi in Lolo (Laman 754).

served. This disease appears as a rule after mpele sores. If these have not been properly cleansed, swellings on the leg at the side of the calf sometimes appear, and on the arms at the wrists. It is the blood from the mpele sores that is said to cause this, and it may sometimes also occasion swelling of the nose. This, too, seems to be infectious. The affected person may not eat *minkanya*-potatoes.

Ndadi sores may be of two kinds: *ndadi* that break out and *ndadi za mbumbu*, which do not break out. These sores are dressed with *nsadi* stones and lemon, or else they are cured with *nkisi Mpodi*. In this case a fire is made with *mwindu*-wood and other wood, palm-oil is applied to the sores and a medicine consisting of *nkandikila*, *tondo* and *kalazima* is spat out on them, after which *looko-fungus* from a palm and a medicine-mixture of the *lubota-bota* plant and *lemba-lemba* is applied. When this is over the sores are warmed at the fire until they are dry.

Sores which refuse to heal and which are considered to be caused by *bankita* are often treated by a *nganga*, who puts a cupping horn at the side of them and sucks them out. The patient is made to drink a *myemo*-mixture. After the treatment the *nganga* shows what he has sucked out. The patient may not drink palm-wine with *nkunku*-worms in it.

In case of contusions etc. with bleeding, for example if a man falls down a palm-tree, a bandage is bound above and below the place whence the bleeding comes. The following morning massage with *mikubulu*-bags from a *nkisi* is applied to prevent swelling. Other *banganga* prepare medicine with which the wound is dressed.

There are two kinds of hernia (*mpiki* and *madungu*), one which aches and one which does not ache. The latter may, however, be of considerable size and very troublesome, and it must in some cases be supported in a net bag or the like. If it bursts, it is fatal. It is treated with *nkisi Volo kya Kondo* and *nkisi kya Manyenda*. Remains of *nsoso*, *lolo* or *nzonzi* tomatoes are boiled up mixed with leaves of wormwood and the *kyenga*-tree and the resulting medicine drunk by the patient. Attempts may further be made to suck away the hernia through *nkisi Mpodi*. If a member of the *Nkimba* gets a hernia he must be promoted to *nganga Nlemba* and consecrated. The sick person may also be treated with *nkisi Nakongo* and medicine consisting of *lemba-lemba* and the *dimbuzu* herb, which are boiled. Strangulation hernia is very painful and soon proves fatal. When it begins to ache and the testicle tends to move into the abdomen they grasp the scrotum to prevent this (fig. 12: c).

The large intestine may sometimes fall out (*khamanana*). *Nkisi Khamanana* is here resorted to for a cure.

Urethral stricture is treated with *nkisi Nzyodi*. The *nganga* takes snails with him and crumbles a *myemo*-mixture, whereupon he draws *mamoni* stripes, saying: "Let him not excrete blood, let him not pass bloody urine."

Toothache (*meeno tatika*) is caused by *bankita* or *bansoko*, which bite in the mouth-cavity. It is treated with *nkisi Simbi* or *Bundula*. The sufferer may then not eat maize and stale (dead) manioc that *bankoko* (insects or antelopes) have not eaten. Nowadays

they use also a plant that is boiled in water to make a soup. When this has cooled it is poured in the patient's mouth and the toothache is alleviated. Another method of treatment is with ground pepper and salt. A part of this is eaten by the patient and a smaller portion is laid on a maize leaf that is folded up and tied with a string; the medicine is then fastened round the chin. Toothache is caused also when the teeth have been filed. Bananas are then roasted hard in a fire and ground to powder together with, amongst other things, nungu za nzo and nkandikila. The nganga now tastes the medicine, after which the patient eats it with a stick.

If someone falls and breaks an arm or a leg, the limb is put in a splint. For this purpose palm-ribs are broken off and plaited firmly around the broken limb to keep it straight. In case of a compound fracture pieces of the nkula-tree or pounded nkula-balls are applied, to give a hard and firm foundation. Frequently they also break a hen's leg and put this in splints, for when the hen's leg has knitted they remove the patient's bandage, for his bone is now also assumed to be healed. After this the leg is massaged with hot water and a banana shoot that has been softened and warmed at the fire. In case of bone-fractures recourse may also be had to nkisi Kubungu. A nganga lays the sick person on the ground and invokes his nkisi while others sing and beat the drums. Meantime, bansele termites are allowed to build a bridge across the fractured part. Just as the termites make the join on the outside, so must the bone be set inwardly.

If the leg is not actually broken, but the fall has been so bad that there is a stoppage of circulation in the limb, or if there is a stoppage of circulation from some other cause, softened banana leaves that have been warmed at the fire are applied and the patient is massaged in the same way to start the blood circulating in the part again. The patient may also be laid on the leaves and rolled until the blood is more evenly dispersed.

Boils (ndelo, ndulakani) often occur in the groin, the armpit or on the nape of the neck. While they are still small an attempt is made to prevent their development by puncturing them with the point of a knife heated in the fire. Sometimes they may be treated with hens' droppings or leaves of a certain bush to "disperse the boils", so that they will not suppurate and need to be punctured. If a boil gets big and "ripe", it is punctured with a pointed shining knife, after which palm-oil is smeared on the wound to keep it soft and reduce the pain. A little tampon of twisted raphia-fibres is used as a plug, so that the pus can seep out. The pain caused by a boil is called ndwe-ndwe (cutting, stinging), zubu-zubu (pulsating) or dumu-dumu (jumping). The sufferer cries: "Ah, mother, I am dying! Oh, father, I am dying! Oh, it is burning, it is smarting!" Mena-mena boils may occur anywhere on the body, and are removed with leaves of manyangidi-potatoes, bananas and disoko, or with powder that has been scraped from certain trees. To find out whether a boil is suppurating, ground chalk with nzi-bean is applied. Mayokwa and nswete boils are rather common; some persons appear to be specially subject to them. Diyokwa is the biggest, and must be carefully punctured. Finger-boils (sikaka twamoka) ache until they burst. If it is desired to prevent the

development of the boil, a hole is made in half a lemon, which is then applied to the affected finger or toe.

In case of snake-bite a bandage that has been blessed by bakisi is used to bind the part so that the venom may not spread. Massage with mikubulu-bags is then applied, and the person performing this operation says: "Get better, get better!" The arm or leg, as the case may be, is finally smeared with mani-streaks. A nganga may not suck out the venom until minkwiza-juice and dinsusu-herbs have been applied and the wound has been struck with mikubulu. If he then wants to suck out the venom the same day he must take a cupping horn into which he squeezes out nsaku-nsaku (kind of cyprus with perfumed roots). If he sucks the wound with his lips he must put the same medicine into his mouth or some other with a good smell. If anyone gets stung or bitten by poisonous insects he is struck all over the body with mikubulu-bags (fig. 26).

If a menstruation is a fortnight or a month overdue, other women must take care not to sit on the seat belonging to the menstruating woman, for this may be a source of infection; and her husband must beg for palm-kernels from which his wife has squeezed oil, and must place these under the couch where they sleep.

If a nkisi prevents a married woman from giving birth, mpusu-cords are made, down is taken from the nkuku-bird, a cocoon from a praying cricket and a calabar-bean are procured, and the woman winds the cords treated with these substances round her waist and then rubs herself with yellow ochre and chalk. If the child-birth is prevented by her ancestors, her parents go to the burial place and worship them.

When the birth-throes are felt, nkisi Muhingu's shells are procured, and the woman must drink from these. They then collect palm-kernels from the rubbish heap and send for her brothers-in-law, so that the latter may come and wipe the palm-kernels over her belly. If the woman does not now give birth she has committed adultery, and she must confess to this in order to be delivered of the child.

A kind of chest-pain may be contracted by a woman who is giving birth to her first child, if she does not observe the prohibitions imposed on her by nkisi Mbenza, with whom she has been treated. Among these prohibitions may be noted e.g. that she may not eat chicken or Mbenza's ngungu (the head and breast of animals) with those who have not given birth under the guidance of Mbenza. The fire on which food has been cooked is besprinkled with water, and the utensils from which the patient has eaten are washed, so that no one else who uses them shall fall ill or become unclean. If one who has not given birth under Mbenza's superintendence gets this illness and is then to be delivered of a child, she must go and seek nkisi Mbenza's help. If she does not get well, basimbi have bewitched her; if she dies, this is due to bandoki.

Beela kwa nsi (sickness from the ground) implies that the mother's milk becomes all too plentiful, her belly, and for that matter also the man's belly, becomes as stout and big as if she were pregnant; she can no longer go up a mountain. The malaise is incurable, and the sufferers must inevitably die, for it is caused by their having coitus on the bare ground, which is strictly forbidden in all tribes.

A kinsende-rash is treated with leaves of nkutuzi, mimfuku-mfuku and manta mbooka. If this affords no relief, nkisi Kinsende is resorted to. Palm-oil may also be used, but in this case gunpowder must be set fire to and leaves of the nlumbu-plant wiped on the rash.

In cases of swelling that is tender and painful recourse is had to minkisi Bunzi, Mayiza or Nakongo. In these minkisi there is a round stone, kileema, with which the patient is massaged, the nganga saying: "Eh, mister Bunzi, make him not as slender as the ntondya-fish, kill your mbanzi-larvæ, kill your minsakala-ants, soothe, soothe. Wo! Thither I send you, where virgins and young men increase. Ravish, strike! Behind there are no persons left. Behind are the players of your rattles, your choir that answers."

Muscular pains are caused by bankita larvæ that bite and eat. The medicine used consists of lusaku-saku, tonda, nkiduku, ndingi, nungu za nzo, the calabar-bean, nkandikila and charcoal, which are made into a mixture to be drunk by the sufferer. The bankita may also be sucked out with the help of nkisi Mpodi.

Joint-pains are treated by nkisi Nkokolo's nganga. He takes the minkwiza plant, which is twisted so that its sap may be sprinkled on the patient's body, and medicine from the salu-bag, and draws with ash on the sick person's arms, legs and trunk. The man (woman) suffering from pains in the joints must ask his (her) sisters-in-law (brothers-in-law) to roll himself (herself) in kanga (red clay). But they also massage with other things, e.g. a serving slice, and old hoe or pestle with which they pound peanuts. The implement used is then fastened in a band and worn by the patient. When applying massage the masseur begins with the arms and continues with the legs, massaging them three times on either side and saying: "Bind, release again, sister-in-law

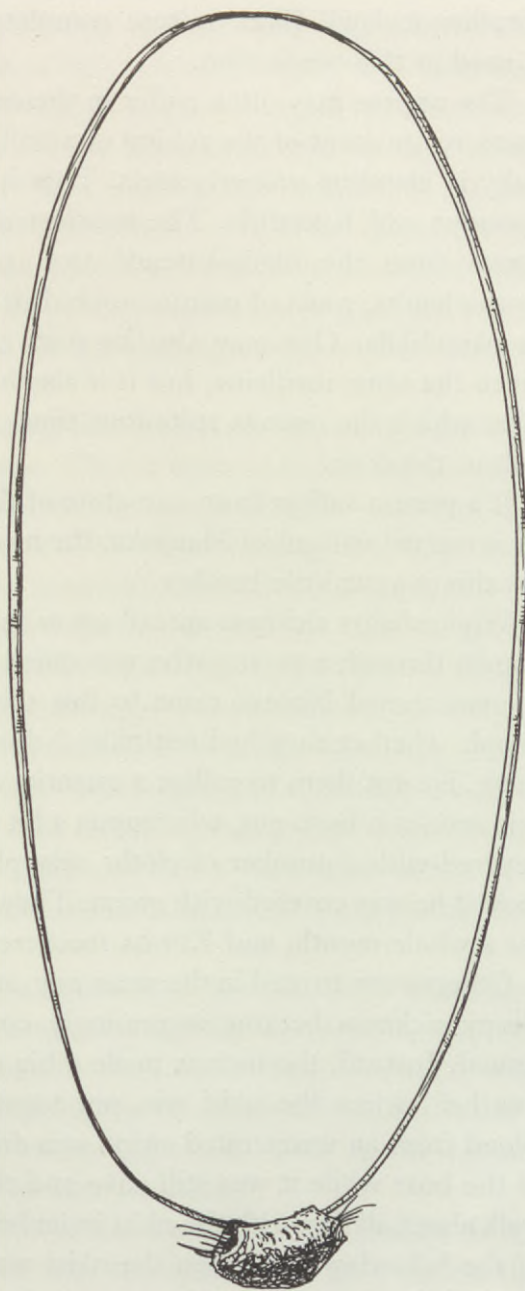


Fig. 17. Amulet (Mwana Ngundu), Sundi in Lolo (Laman 473).

(brother-in-law)! Bind, release completely, sister-in-law (brother-in-law)!" No nkisi is used in this connection.

The natives may often suffer in the small of the back (mambusa etc.) from burning pains reminiscent of the aching of a boil in the groin, when the sufferer will find difficulty in standing properly erect. This is treated with, inter alia, minkisi Ndeko, Kindyondyo and Kinsafula. The masticated mixture here used as a medicine consists of leaves from the nkula-katende tree, projecting shoots of nyanga-grass, dimbusu, lemba-lemba, roots of manioc soaked in water and ordinary mabukulu-medicine, such as nkandikila. One may also for such cases use nkisi Konda ndungu. The patient is given the same medicine, but it is also held upright against the kunzi-post at the door, after which the nganga spits four times on his waist-line and massages him with the bolt of the door.

If a person suffers from curvature of the spine, so that he cannot straighten his back, he is treated with nkisi Mankaka, the nganga calling out: "Eh, stop it, mister Mankaka, for this is your little brother."

When sleepy sickness spread up as far as the tract of Mukimbungu it first became known through a person who was called KUNGA, because he moaned (kunga) so much. A man named NGOMA came to this tract from Boma and saw KUNGA; he asked the people whether they had not nkisi Ndungina (sit and sleep), otherwise he would help them. He got them to collect a quantity of wood from the lubota-tree, made a fire with this and let it burn out, whereupon a lot of banana-leaves were laid on top. The patient, covered with a number of cloths, was placed on the leaves. When the cloths were removed he was covered with sweat. They now bathed him with water and oil every day for a whole month, and KUNGA recovered.

Others were treated in the same way, and some are said to have been cured. When the sleepy sickness became increasingly common, however, this treatment was discontinued. Instead, the natives made a big nkisi that was named Ndungina. A great feast was held when the nkisi was put together, and it was given a large medicine-bag. Blood from an uncastrated swine was dripped on the nkisi, a hole was cut in the belly of the boar while it was still alive and the nkisi was put into it. The beast was left to walk about all day with the nkisi in its belly, and was not slaughtered until the morning of the following day, when the nkisi was removed. The nganga received two cups of gunpowder, six hens and nine calabashes of palm-wine for his work.

On the northern bank of the Congo those suffering from sleepy sickness were treated with nkisi Pama nkwanga, which was made in a little pot. For this treatment small scores are made in the patient's skin all over his body, so that the blood oozes forth. A bitter medicine made from the pounded root-tubers of masoko (wild potato) and ngamba (a poisonous root-tuber that is also used in fishing) is smeared on, and this is done in strong sunshine, so that the blood and the medicine may mix. The patient may not drink palm-wine or eat nsafu from consecrated trees, not may he drink palm-wine that has stood over-night, or eat yuma dish that has stood from the previous day.

Formerly, it was generally attempted to cure sleepy sickness with steam-baths administered in various ways. Thus, for example, a little round house of teva-mats was erected and in the middle of the floor a pit was dug. A hot fire was then built up outside and stones put in to heat. When they were red-hot the nganga took strongly smelling ngowa, masisa and other plants and burnt them, placing their remains in the pit. The red-hot stones were now put in also, water was poured over them and the teva-house, where the patient was left, was now shut up and the whole even covered with blankets. Another method which is used implies putting the leaves in question into a pot placed on the fire. When the pot is removed the patient is got to sit over it, covered with cloths and blankets.

The natives have tried to cure syphilis (nsumba) with herbal medicines, of which the most effective is said to be fresh, green tobacco. This is first crumbled and the juice dripped into the urethra and on the sores, which are treated thrice daily, in which connection the pus is scraped away. Further, the bark of the nsanga-nsanga tree is crushed and the tinder scraped off and boiled. When the medicine has cooled it is drunk by the patient. Medicine is also made from munkoki, ndimba-ndimba and other creepers; this is drunk from a mug with lemon-juice, after which a mug of palm-wine is drunk.

Syphilitic sores in the nose (nsasi mbola) were thought to be caused by nkisi Nsasi mbola. The whole nose is one sore. They spit a medicine of lusaku-saku and nungu za nzo on it. A medicine-mixture of mambuzu, mabolongo and malemba-lemba is poured into a square pit dug in the ground, into which is also poured fresh water, whereupon the mixture is thoroughly stirred. A little of this is then taken in the hollow of the hand and the patient drinks three times. Earth is smeared in patches all over the patient's body.

Another painful syphilitic sore that cannot be healed and spreads over a wider and wider area is called bovi or bomvi. This sore may eat away the whole nose, may occasion swellings in the legs and arms and paralyse the sinews. This is treated with nkisi Mbola and with nkisi Kibomvi, besides scrapings of the nlolo and vutulwa trees, a medicine consisting of mfili-tree, mboobo (a sticky fluid from seeds of the banana plant) and leaves of mwindu is used and dripped into the sores.

Mabaka sores are spongy and attack the soles of the feet. They are treated in the same way as mpele and ndadi sores; sometimes, too, the diiza-cactus growing on the moor is used.

Smallpox (kingenya etc.) was formerly a dreaded disease which accounted for the lives of many people. If any of the villagers was afflicted with this disease his hut was moved far away from the village, and the other villagers also removed to some distance. Someone who had already had smallpox had to stay behind to nurse the patient. Nowadays, in case of an epidemic, a paramount nganga (ngudi a nganga) and nkisi Nkubulu are summoned. When the nganga has arrived everyone must return to the village, bringing with them what they took away, for Nkubulu has come to drive away the disease. All the men from the paramount nganga's village accompany him, but they may

not show themselves in the village in the day-time, but only at night. The paramount nganga makes them tie strips of palm-leaf along the village road where strangers generally approach. When the medicine-man arrives the ndungu-drum is beaten and songs are sung throughout the night: "O, you have made Nkubulu, Be strong, mother! O be sufficient! O let us escape (it)! To-morrow (we shall perform) the work, mother (Salu mbazi maame)!"

In this connection the ngudi a nganga gets spasms and anyone at all in the crowd may lapse into ecstasy. After this they sleep until the dawn. The paramount nganga now calls out: "E twakandama kweto (O let us escape)!" All those in the village must reply: "E twakandama kweto, Nkubulu (O let us escape, O Nkubulu)!" Early in the morning all the villagers must assemble in a row, with the sick persons in another row. The paramount nganga must now place the nkisi's bonzo-mixture in a water-dish and crumble it up in the water, afterwards besprinkling those who have followed him with the water, exclaiming the while: "Kadi twakandama kweno (May you all escape)!" They reply: "E, twakandama kweto!" The water is then sprinkled on the villagers. Those who recover first must sprinkle water on others and answer: "E, twakandama kweto!" The nganga is then to besprinkle the sick persons. The villagers need not receive any bananas, but must themselves go and cut them. The peel may not be thrown on the rubbish heap.

Along the village roads they tie bunches made of strips of leaves taken from palm branches and maize etc., and on these are hung leaves from mfilu and nlolo trees, manunga mazingazi and the minsanga-lavu plant. No stranger is allowed to pass such a lulembe palm-branch to enter the village. If any stranger should unwittingly enter the village in this way he must pay a fine and must get magical protection for his gun, or otherwise pay a fine to the nkisi and fire a shot. If a hen should step on the banana-peel it must be trussed up, and all say: "E, twakandama, e Nkubulu (May we be preserved, O Nkubulu)!" Day and night those assembled must dance and jump with energy, and the ndungu-yankwalu drum be beaten. Many go into ecstasies, and they also get names at this nkisi. When the followers of the nganga have finished putting together nkisi in the day-time they return to their village, carrying with them all the poultry, all the pots in which they have cooked food, the plates, spoons, mbangu-dishes (baskets) and bidodo-baskets, everything, in fact, that has been used they must absolutely take away, for the disease attaches to this and they have come to drive it away. This is the purification in the village and of the people. Nkisi Nkubulu has many ceremonies, and only his nganga may touch a sufferer from smallpox. He makes a bonzo-medicine of raphia-fibres and all the poisonous things to be found in the forest and on the plains. To this are then added pounded leaves from nlolo and mfilu trees. He now gets hold of a little pot in which he places other yimbu (poisonous things), which are mixed and pounded up with charcoal. During the night the pot is put out on the road to the village, and all the female inhabitants must go there and urinate in it. In the morning palm-wine is poured into the pot and the paramount nganga must stir



Fig. 18. A, Nkisi for the Nkimba Society, Sundi in Mayombe (Laman 595). B, Nkisi Nsungu, Sundi in Kinkonzi (Laman 506).

it about with the finger. All the inhabitants of the village, whatever their age, drink a little from the pot. Mpita-stripes are then smeared on their temples and brows, and the nganga says: "E, twakandama Nkubulu." All confirm this: "E, twakandama kweto."

The sufferers are helped by having the pustules punctured every other day with a sharp pointed palm-rib or wooden stick. The pustules are then bathed with hot water and besmeared with nkula-pomade or red ochre which smells nice. The patient must be bathed carefully before and after the treatment. Before the disease had come to the village it was called Nkiduku Manzungu. The song that was sung when this nkisi was made runs as follows: "Let us not see each other, oh, Manzungu. Let us not see each other, oh, rule (over the sickness)! Let us not see each other, oh, Manzungu." When this was sung the singers waved leaf-covered branches of, inter alia, nlolo, mfilu and mansusu. They waved them in the air to drive away the wind and the plague.

Chicken-pox (maboazu, kutu-kutu) is reminiscent of smallpox, and is characterized by small vesicles on the body and a tenderness in the soles of the feet. Alleviation is afforded by rubbing hot water and chalk over the patient, for this makes the vesicles burst. Kutu-kutu develops as a mavivi-rash, the sick person becomes feverish and wants only to sleep. Relief is afforded by dabbing on dust and manioc-leaves.

Fevers (nleemo, yuku-yuku etc.) are treated with, inter alia, minkisi Mayiza, Nkondi and Nakongo. The medicine that is drunk here consists of a mixture of, amongst other things, malemba-lemba, mansusu ma nkento and wormwood, and in addition to this the patient is given baths and steam-baths to provoke perspiration. He may also drink nkisi Nkondi's ndembo-mixture. Nzangala-fevers are cured with a little nkisi that is placed in a small lip of the nsaava-calabash. It is called binuni-nuni (the little birds). In this is laid excrement from the little black birds mbela, which is afterwards drunk in newly fetched water.

Leprosy (bwazi) was not cured, but the sores could be treated with tree-leaves with which also other sores were treated. If leprosy occurred in a family the sufferer was buried, or the corpse might be placed in a cave. If the disease continued its ravages the corpse was leaned against a certain creeper in the forest. The creeper in question is in part red and it is forbidden to use it for firewood.

Ringworm (binsampala) may be cured if one spreads lwinza, nwizi and gunpowder on the sores. When the ringworm is first manifested, mabinda (incisions) are made in one corner of the affected area, a fly is killed, crushed and smeared on the part together with thinned hens' droppings and gunpowder. To cure scurf on the scalp (makoko) a compress of ndoba (pomade) made from roasted peanuts and bitter herbs is applied.

Bronchial catarrh and sore throat are treated with nkisi Nkaku and nkisi Nkakala (mya simu) if one takes a loop of the nambuzu-mbuzu plant, which is made effective with a medicine and hung round the neck of the sick person.

In the mouth-cavity and the gums one may get a swelling with water blisters (zon-



Fig. 19. Nkisi Mpodi: a, Sundi in Mukimbungu (Laman 620); b, Sundi in Kingoyi (Laman 1345); c, Sundi in Kingoyi (Laman 1351).

zolo) and shooting (zyozyozyo) pains, so that one can neither drink water nor laugh. The remedies applied here are nungu za nzo, charcoal, banana treated with a medicine and nkisi Mbola.

A sufferer from mumps (mayititiu) opens his mouth over a mortar in which palm-kernels are being ground and cries out several times: "Eh, how am I sick?"

Filaria (looba) may be removed by some with a needle. Otherwise, a drop-medicine of tobacco, mumpala mbaki and water from a petal in a banana-blossom is resorted to. The medicine is laid on at night. This affection may also be treated with leaves of the luzizya-creeper, which are attached to a piece of wood; this is then used to spread the medicine on the eye.

Thread-worm is cured with nkisi Mwe Nsandi. The nganga gets the patient to eat maize and peanuts from the mukubulu-bag. If the latter suffers also from stomach-

ache he must in addition to this drink from the nkisi's pot palm-wine freshly tapped that day. Some of the larger types of worm are called "snakes of the stomach".

Scabies (*lengwa*), the disease of the kimpele-rat, is treated with palm-oil, ground nkula-red and yellow ochre or with leaves of the mampwese-bean which are crumbled and wiped on the irritated area. One may also have recourse to nkisi Nzau or use makongo-stone, gunpowder and lemon-juice. Sometimes the natives use leaves of madimba, a bit of dyeba (tree-fruit) that has been scorched and ground, together with palm-nuts and botila etc. Leaves of wormwood, of the cotton-bush and lemon-juice also give relief. Occasionally nkisi Nkondi may be resorted to.

Stitch in the side was cured with nkisi Mpanzu or nkisi Kimpanzu-mpanzu, which is made from sticks from the outer side of palm-ribs and made to cohere with nkuki (resin). On top of Mpanzu is placed a kola-kernel and the medicine is worn on the chest. No one may break off a palm-rib from the wall of the house or the bed unless he tramps on it or cuts it off with a knife. If anyone sees another breaking off palm-ribs over his head, the former protects himself by taking a bit of the rib and breaking off a piece on either side of his chest and shouting: "Eh, maama, stitch in the side, Mister Mpanzu!" In case of stitch in the side one may also address oneself to nkisi Makwende, who thrusts a knife in the chest (fig. 9:a).

Chest pains in general, with bad respiration, coughing, pains in the back and chest are cured through nkisi Nsungina. As medicines are used roasted banana, lusaku-saku (papyrus with sweet-smelling tubers), cocoon of the praying cricket and nungu za nzo (*Amomum Granum paradisi*). The medicine is powdered into lemba-lemba (medicinal tree), mansusu (*Ocinum* plant) and yangu-yangu (medicinal plant) and drunk. With this medicine is mixed also kuma-medicines such as e.g. chalk, tukula-red, nkandikila (tree-fruit used as nkisi medicine), carbon and tondo (a fungus that grows under the ground).

To cure a cough, a quantity of pepper is ground and added to hot water. Two to four spoonfuls of this are taken at a time, after which only hot water is drunk. If this does not help, a nganga is summoned. If the patient also has a stitch that "stabs and stabs", nkisi Kileeke is resorted to. The spot where the "stabbing" is felt is massaged and leaves are applied with the excrement of grasshoppers and green, fresh palm-kernels. If the cough is severe, Nsungina's nganga is consulted. From the nkisi-bag he takes the medicine nungu za nzo, which consists, amongst other things, of cocoon of praying cricket, lusaku-saku and dry leaves of kooko bananas. When the medicine is ready for use the nganga spits on the ribs of the sick person and says: "Strike Kin-sungina", and spits; this repeated at least once. From the dry banana leaves braces are made, and these are fastened over the patient's chest. The latter may not eat roasted bananas, shelled or pounded peanuts, nor may he lick a serving slice or a spoon. If the sick person coughs blood he must drink herbal medicine, if he has difficulty in breathing he must be laid down at the forking of the ways outside the village. He must then be sprayed with chewed cola-nut and manioc. A pit is dug and in this a mark of the cross

is made. Water is poured into the pit and the mud is stirred and smeared on the sick person in the morning. This is done through nkisi Nsunganana.

Heart-pains are manifested as a pain called mafundu-fundu and cramp, so that the patient throws himself on the mat and rolls about. The medicine used consists of extracts of nsokolo, lusaku, nungu za nzo and nkandikila. The nkisi is Fuka ntima.

Inflammation of the lungs (mfwemo, mfwebo or nlaka) is characterized by the fact that the patient's chest heaves and a hissing sound is heard (swe, swe, swe), and that the respiration tends to stop. It is cured with nkisi Mfwemo, with the help of leaves that are rubbed to powder and drunken. A ladle for the serving of food is used. If the patient is a boy he must climb up on a roof when he gets the medicine. The patient may not eat roasted maize or selukaa and mvukudi bananas. Boiled maize, on the other hand, he may eat in company with another. When the maize is portioned out his share is set on a stick, so that he will not become unclean and ill. As it is believed that the sick person has too much blood in his chest, he is cupped here, bathed with hot water and massaged with a banana-shoot. The patient may also be treated with nkisi Kinkwanga which is placed on the neck, he may, further, drink an infusion of manga leaves or nsafu leaves.

Stomach-ache (vumu tatika) with severe pains caused by, inter alia, the munsakala ant is cured with nkisi Nkumba, a medicine containing, amongst the other things, chalk, and kept in a snail-shell. Palm-wine is poured into the medicine, which is then given to the patient to drink, while the nganga intones: "E, Nkumba na Nayama has given me kimpati (synonymous with kinganga) power, he has given me kinganga power, you enrich paramount nganga, you enrich the novice. Do you treat (the patient) internally, I will treat (him) externally." There are several other snail-shell minkisi, such as e.g. Kinzyokolo, Nkala Nkulu and Nkala nguba. The patient may not, together with another, eat mandembe or binenga tomatoes that have been boiled in yuuma, nor may he eat manioc that has been taken up the same day. He may not stand while drinking, he must sit or crouch. If another stands while drinking he must abase himself if the sick man has recovered. If the patient does not get really well and strong he must be given bitter herbs to drink, such as nkomo and kyengo-root, or he must chew leaves of the minsangula-tree or wormwood, so that what is "biting" in his stomach may die and the pain be relieved. If the stomach-ache is felt as a shooting pain (nazikitini-zikitini) which keeps up in whatever position the subject may lie, and even when he drinks water, the medicine administered consists of maize, peanuts, charcoal, fresh palm-wine and nkisi Mwe Nsundi.

Nausea (ntima vweta or fidibila) is treated with nkisi Mvwete. The sick person is given old palm-wine and lots of pepper, then the nkisi is fastened round his neck. The malaise may also be treated with nkisi Fwadi Kyanga, containing much ground pepper and salt. The following medicines are then taken: semwa, nkandikila, tondi, kyala mooko and ndingi to dima (spit out) on the heart. They also give the nkisi a little palm-wine by pouring it into a maize leaf. The nganga having nkisi Fwadi Kyanga must sit on the bed with crossed legs, and he and the patient must give the nkisi to each other

three times. If this does not help the sick person must have such a nkisi made and must dedicate himself to its service.

Vomiting (lobula) is cured with nkisi Ndobudi. The latter's medicine is pounded up and drunk by the sick person, and the nkisi is fastened round his neck until he recovers.

Colic (mvindani mu vumu) with cramp due to poisoning is cured with minkisi Lukengo, Kikuyungu or Nkukula. If one has these minkisi one may even eat mbisucactus from the plain without feeling anything amiss. The kola-nuts belonging to this nkisi, which are to be eaten in the morning, are placed overnight on a woman's vulva. Nothing poisonous can then do any harm.

If mantuku (the side of the navel) is aching the following remedy is resorted to. A root of the mungaka-plant is roasted, ground on a stone and mixed with gunpowder. The medicine is then smeared in scores in the skin round the navel. The patient shrieks and the nganga says: "You will get better!" If he does not shriek, he dies.

If the stomach becomes suddenly tense and it feels as if something living were gnawing it, then nkisi Mpodi, containing, amongst other things, maize, is employed to kill the pain. Further, the patient is cupped. To facilitate the evacuation of the bowels several minkisi are used, such as e.g. Nakongo, Mayiza, Makwende and Kukula, the last-mentioned being a snail-shell. Without resorting to any nkisi one may also give the sick person kroton-nuts, nkasa-poison or diiza-cactus in water, palm-wine or palm-oil soup. In the same way leaves of nkomo and clay, leaves of mabunzila and roots of the kyenga-tree may be used; and one may also take wormwood and some other bitter herb, pulverize the leaves, stuff them into the munkoka-pipe and let the patient smoke this.

Other remedies for stomach-ache are herbs like makinza ngolo, nsonya grass, leaves of zowa, ntondo and numbu a mfuma, or nyondo-cactus in palm-wine and ngombocloth from nkisi Nkukula. The herb ndimbu-ndimbu is a powerful medicine against colic pains. If they do not stop, a nganga must be brought to restore the nsala-soul. If this does not help, a nganga is sent for to cut open the patient's stomach and take away what is "biting". During the night the nganga gives the patient a herb with myemo-mixture in order to quieten that which is biting and roaring about in the stomach, for the medicine is effective through nkisi's power. In the morning the medicine-man is given a large dish which he will need to spit blood into when he sucks this up during the operation. When the nganga is ready to undertake the operation he, together with the sick person, goes in under a thick or spotted bindi-cloth, while those outside beat the drum and shake rattles. Now the nganga "cuts a hole" in the stomach near the diaphragm. He makes a cut with the knife, applies his mouth to the wound and shouts very loudly, so that all will understand that this is the biting thing which he is tearing away with his teeth. His mouth is all bloody, as is also the "thing". Such a medicine-man is well paid when he saves the patient's life, and his helpers are given one or two hens.

If suffering from bloody diarrhoea (ngwala menga) the patient must drink pounded



Fig. 20. *Nkisi Nduda*: a, *Sundi in Kiobo* (Laman 505); b, *Sundi in Mayombe* (Laman 1263).

spotted wormwood stirred up in water. He may also be allowed to drink from nkisi Kipeeka's pot, after which the nganga repairs to the river to prepare bonzo-medicine, containing, inter alia, leaves that grow under water. He stands in the middle of the stream and throws the water up and down, after which he also pours water on the bonzo-mixture together with a root of the mutumbi-tree. The patient may now drink of the mixture.

In cases of pains in the brain with giddiness the nganga finds out whether bandoki are the cause or not by cracking nteete-seed. If bandoki are at the bottom of it the medicine-man must restore the patient's soul by pulverizing leaves of mabolongo and malemba-lemba. Men and women who have pubic hairs must now spit saliva on the medicine, which is given to the sick man to drink. He is also beaten with leaves of the lubota, nlolo and mfilu trees.

Cramp (kimfulu-mfulu) is generally cured by burning a syoto-frog at the forking of the road leading to the village, after which the nganga gets the patient to lick a nkisi having a ndata-bag, i.e. a Kimfulu-mfulu.

Epilepsy is cured by the nganga whipping the sick person with masisya ma bongo

leaves, which he is also made to smell, as well as leaves of dinsusu. He is further made to wear a crab's claw that has been stuffed with medicine.

If the patient is suffering from delirium or insanity the nganga says that a "joy-nkisi" has attacked him and caused the illness. The nganga must then smell out which nkisi has done this, he may, for example, belong to the families Malwangu or Nsonde. The nkisi causing the medicine-man to fall into ecstasy when smelling out the trouble is the culprit. The medicine used consists of leaves of lemba-lemba and mabolongo, a stalk of the munkwisa herb and stagnant (ndingi) water from a tree-stump. Munkwisa must be pounded up together with nkandikila, nkiduku, copal (ndingi), earth from a termite-nest on the plains and matekita ants. Malemba-lemba must have lain on the laps of those living in the village and of the nganga. The medicine is cut up and spat at the patient by the nganga. All the villagers must drink from the mixture at night, after which the nganga sprinkles them with the medicine, whereupon they return to their homes to sleep. In the middle of the night the nganga takes a dish of the stagnant water and besprinkles the roof of the hut in which the sick person is lying. If the latter starts, he is perhaps incurable, if he does not start, the nganga knows that he can be cured. In the morning the nganga asks all the villagers: "Have you been well to-night, and have you had good dreams?" If they answer: "Only good ones have we had" the nganga replies: "I too have seen good cola-nuts and salt." He must also dress his patient in mambuzu-mbuzu creeper with leaves. If the sufferer does not feel any alleviation, it cannot have been the suspected nkisi that attacked him, and the nganga must then continue treating him.

The sufferer may also drink a fen-mixture of lemba-lemba, dinsusu and lemba toko in palm-wine. In the evening the patient is treated out on the highway or at the approaches to the village. His relatives cut munkwisa-leaves and take ash from the huts to strew on the road where he is to be cured. He must sit down on his own mat and the banganga must take mankonko (cooking banana), i.e. leaves in which they make holes over his hand (kimpanzingila). The relatives cut slices of munkwisa and give these to each nganga for him to squeeze out the juice on the sick man, singing the while: "I shall draw with the chalk, I have become nganga, it has been sprinkled, e-e-e, mother, been sprinkled." They also sing: "Make him not restless in his heart, make him not delirious! Ngongo (a nkisi of the family Nkidukwa) has lost his sense of smell, lost his hearing."

Diseases of the eye like cataract (ntenzi) etc. with a white film may be cured if one pulverizes mpenzi-mussel shell or a little piece of a mirror and strews it in the eye, for the ground particles will gnaw away the film. In the north recourse was had to nkisi Luhofu. Here the nganga makes marks at the corners of his eyes and on his temples with yellow ochre, and then makes a little pit in the ground. Into this he pours water and stirs it up. He smears the medicine at the corners of the patient's eyes and on his temples, saying: "Make him not blear-eyed, not weak-sighted!" At the same time he fans the sufferer's face with a piece of raphia cloth.

Attempts to cure blindness are made by laying on leaves of mumbaki-mbaki. Further, the leaves are scraped to make a drop-medicine. If this leads to no result an attempt is made with a mixture of dinsusu dya mbakala and mbala mfumu. Should this, too, be of no avail, recourse is had to drop-medicine from nkisi Nyambi.

Eye pains are cured with nkisi Mpoo and nkisi Mayiza and their drop-medicine. Foreign bodies in the eyes are removed by strewing a little scraping from a mussel in the organ. If this affords no relief a hen's feather is dipped in water and used to wipe the object out of the eye.

Ear-ache (matu tatika) has its seat in the ear and shrieks like the nzenze-cricket or the little cricket yee-yee-e-e. It is treated with nkisi Ntendani. A cricket, a squeezed palm-kernel and a little water are put in a bit of a pot and fried or boiled on the fire. The nganga then takes a drip-cornet of leaves and places this against the bad ear so that the smoke enters, or else he lets the medicine drip at the side of both ears or into them when it has cooled.

If a headache is caused by polypi (nziuti) in the nose, a hole is made in these with a stick. This is done at dinner-time, for when the sun is sinking the polypi collapse and dry. Water, snuff, ash or lukaya lwa ntu herb are introduced into the nasal passages, but if the ache continues despite this treatment recourse is had to nkisi Mbulu Nakosi or nkisi Zunga. In this case the patient may not look at anything that spins or goes round, nor may he look at a torch that is swung aloft to give light, or at a fuku-pot carried in someone's hand. He is also forbidden to drink the first mug of palm-wine when this is poured out, though he may drink the second or the third.

If a sick person has many sisters and wives etc. who can nurse him, and if he is old and held in high esteem, he will be well looked after. Many slaves are assured of good nursing if they have good dispositions and have taken good care of their owner's animals and have been clever in business dealings and hard-working. Other poor persons, too, who have shown good will and industry in the days of their health, are well looked after. If a chief has many slaves, they will take care of one another in case of sickness and in other contingencies; but they may also be visited by the chief himself.

When a man falls ill he is nursed by his wife, mother, sisters or one of his slaves; the wife is nursed by her husband and above all by her brothers and sisters and their slaves. A child is nursed by its mother or father. Chiefs and children are best looked after. If the chief of a village should become seriously ill, of which the people are very much afraid, many banganga are summoned to ascertain the cause of the illness. Frequently one or several persons are pointed out as bandoki, and must then show their innocence by taking nkasa-poison. If such a person does not remain unaffected, his wife and younger brothers may also be sentenced to take nkasa-poison.

Visiting the sick may be a sign of love, friendship or fear, for "the eye of the sick person is open for his own". If he is not visited by them he may harm them in various ways, disinherit them or curse them. It is thus very unwise not to visit a sick relative. He may say: "When I was healthy I had friends, but now that I am ill I have no friends."

When I am dying, So-and-so may not come, for he has killed the friendship." Nor may they come to the burial. If they begin to make trouble (and go to the funeral), then: "O, yaaya we shall see each other again" (they will get a nasty surprise). Frequent visits to a sick person are a blessing for the visitor. The visiting is as a rule done in the morning. There may be a crowd of people both indoors and out. They speak very little, and only one or another may ask: "Did you sleep last night?" "Have you improved since the treatment?" If there has been no improvement the sick person may say: "Oh, I am still being devoured by bandoki, and they are glad. It is not otherwise." If he is better, he answers: "Oh, now I have slept. We shall see, when the sun has gone down."

The women carry wood to the patient's house, for the fire must burn the whole night. The men bring palm-wine with them if the sick man is better. On the occasion of a visit to a chief his favourite wife will tell the visitors how he is, and what pains he has. If an unmarried man is visited the enquirer may stand outside and ask how he is, and what the course of the disease has been.

There are no special houses for the sick in the village, they are nursed in their own homes as long as they are not suffering from smallpox. In this case small huts are erected for them outside the village, and they are here nursed by natives who have had smallpox before. Formerly, however, the sufferer would often be carried into the forest and flung into a ravine.

To determine the cause of an illness is not difficult, for there are only two possibilities: it has been caused either by bandoki or by minkisi. The sick man himself may be a ndoki, and thereby cause both the illness and his own death. This may, for example, be because he has not performed his duty to his fellow-bandoki. But even if he himself is not a ndoki, the sick man may from several causes, e.g. envy or jealousy, be eaten by some ndoki.

A nkisi causes illness if the sick person has incurred guilt through, for instance, theft, adultery or perjury, for which the nkisi has avenged itself in response to the adjurations of his nganga, or again through his defiling himself by the infringement of some prohibition or other. He may also be shot with mata ma nkisi (nkisi-guns) and so forth.

If a sick man has his ndoki-power proved upon him he may be executed. If despite all the measures adopted a person cannot be cured it is often said that Nzambi has eaten him, i.e. it has been his will. Very old and esteemed persons are considered to die a more natural death, a nzambi-death.

CHAPTER V

Death

If someone is near death, *tabuka vuumunu* (to interrupt the breathing), they make him lick up a lot of pepper and throw water over him so that his breath may return. A *nganga* may also cut off the head of a hen, pluck away the down and insert it in his *nkisi*, which implies that he has cut off the sick person's hair and put it in his *nkisi*. The *ndoki* that is eating the patient will then be pursued and killed by this *nkisi*. Then the *nganga* tries to cure the patient.

The person who owns the sick man may himself shave off his hair and cut his nails etc. (*mfunya*) and then place these in one of the big *nkisi* (*Nkosi*), so that the latter may destroy the *bandoki* that are eating the dying man. The hair etc. is tied to the *nkisi* and the *nganga* says: "O mister *nkisi*, who is it that has eaten him? If it is your former brother or chief, elder brother or sister, mother or child, you know this."¹

If a paramount chief appears to be near death a noose is always placed about his neck and the cord thrust through a hole in the wall, where one of the grandchildren pulls the noose tight to strangle him, for he must not be allowed to die a natural death, as he would then take many into death with him. The head was then sometimes placed outside the coffin.

If one of the wives of a *ntinu* (paramount chief) has come from *Mwembe Nsundi* and died, the chief commands his younger brothers, children etc. to form a *Kindunga* group to announce the decease, dance and collect funds for the funeral in the villages. The members of the *Kindunga* rub their bodies with chalk as *bankimba* and dress themselves in *nketa*-skirts made of palm-leaves which are well sewn together with plaits of dry banana-leaves. They also wear masks made of wood and provided with two holes for the eyes and one for the mouth, and generally also with two long horns on their heads that have been smeared with charcoal to make them black.

The *ntinu* has a large shed erected for the *bandunga*. They must celebrate the death of his spouse by dancing day after day. They go from village to village, and when the villagers hear that they are coming they hide their hens in their houses and smear *nkula*-red on the outside of the door, the *bandunga* being forbidden to enter by a door

¹ I.e. the *nkisi* must avenge the sick man.

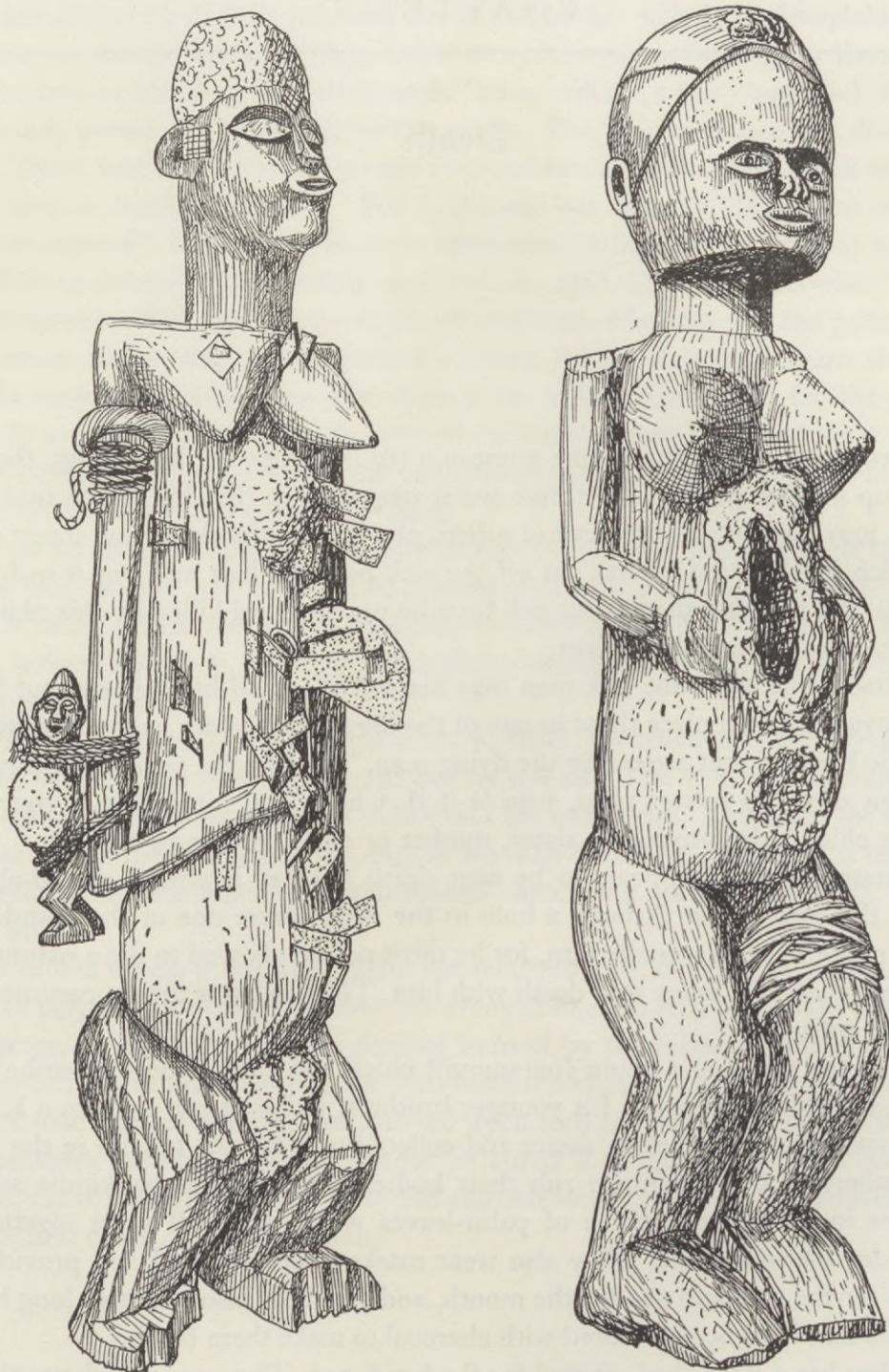


Fig. 21. Nkisi Nkondi: a, Sundi in Mayombe (Laman 1394); b, Sundi in Kingoyi (the leg is mended by the natives, Laman 1397).

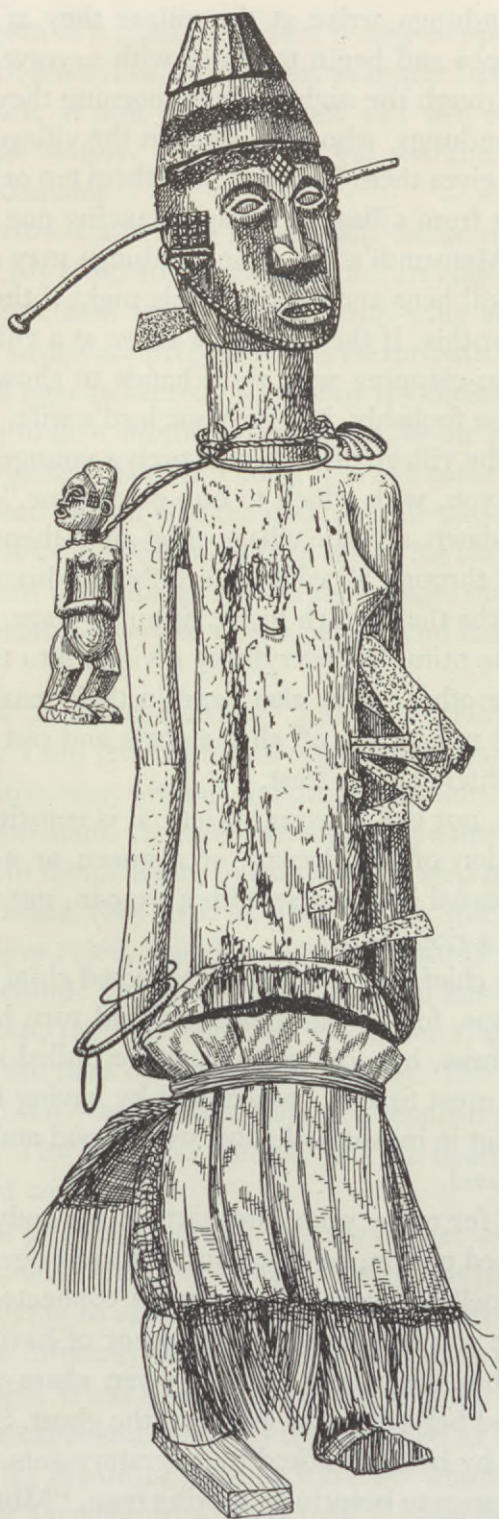


Fig. 22. Nkisi Nkondi, Sundi in Mayombe (Laman 1395).

so marked. When the bandunga arrive at the village they at once start beating the drum, strike bells and gongs and begin to dance with nsyesye-whisks in their hands. They go on dancing all through the night. In the morning they cry: "E, prepare food, women, for the ntinu's bandunga, who have slept in the village."

The chief of the village gives them food and pays them ten or twelve pieces of raphia-cloth. They continue thus from village to village, dancing one day in each village, for so it is decreed in ntinu Mansundi's law. The bandunga may allow themselves to cut bananas in the village, to kill hens and eat the whole night if they have the chance, and none may reprove them for this. If the bandunga arrive at a village with a nsundi-chief they first make a makunku-clapping with their hands to show their respect for him, saying: "We have not come foolishly, but for your lord's wife, because he has sent us, saying: Go and dance in the village of such-and-such a younger brother. Here are five pieces of raphia-cloth for you, with which to buy palm-wine." They then at once start dancing, continuing until dawn, and the village chief gives them food and pays them.

When they have passed through all villages in different directions and been on their way for two or three months they return to the ntinu's village, produce the cloths and wash them, after which the ntinu has everything divided into two heaps, he taking the one and the bandunga the other. They also hand in their masks, which are forthwith put away; they themselves must wash off all the chalk and put on proper clothes. The ntinu now has a pig slaughtered for a feast.

Kindunga is not a nkisi, nor is it a secret society: it is constituted for the solemn announcement and celebration of the decease of a queen or a paramount chief. The bandunga may not have sexual intercourse with a woman, nor may they touch tukularred or enter a house with a ridged roof.

If it is not a paramount chief, but a rich and respected chief who is dying, his wives must take him on their laps, for his last moments, and turn his face upwards. If the moribund person is a woman, her loin-cloth must be pulled up between her legs. If it is Nsonde's nganga, he must first be consecrated by having his finger-nails and toenails cut and the parings put in malemba-lemba, wormwood and salt of the nzeke-nzeke plant and placed on his navel.

If someone has been ill for many years and parts of his body are perhaps rotting he may, if he is not a celebrated person, be killed and left to be devoured by pigs and dogs, to avoid the disgusting smell and consequent nausea connected with his care. Such a patient might formerly be accused of being a ndoki or of having taken the spirit of a deceased person (kinyumba). He would then be given nkasa-poison or have his eyes put out, and then be buried before he had given up the ghost. Such sick persons would sometimes suffer horribly by being attacked by migratory ants. The natives sometimes fetch Mbumba Bingu's nganga to besprinkle a dying man, "Mbumba Bingu's patient".¹ But this implies that it is intended to give him the coup de grâce. Such a corpse was called "Mbumba's corpse".

¹ Mbumba Bingu is a nkisi.

If the moribund person is a chief, however, it may happen that he makes a kandu-prohibition with a sworn assurance, such as, for example: "If I should die, then take the ndungu-drum and dance. If you do not dance, you will soon follow after me." His successors are forced to comply. They dance, but without joy, and they weep when they have finished the dancing.

Exchange of lives occurs if a famous person falls dangerously ill and it is desired to keep him alive, and in his stead to let another die. In such a case Mpodi's nganga is summoned, and the latter asks for two hens, palm-wine and food. A young woman must then fetch leaves, which are prepared for a steam-bath over a pot. But the patient must not perspire. The nganga secretly summons the members of the kanda and asks them if they are willing to give another in exchange, to die in place of the sick man. If they agree to this, the nganga asks for a cock, if it is a male patient. The nganga must then await the dawn, when he will take the cock and the patient to the water to massage the sick man with the water-bath. He must then thrust his hand in the patient's stomach. If the one they have taken in exchange dies in the village, then the patient will recover, for his life has been exchanged for that of the patient and the latter must thereupon get better.

A dying person might be addressed thus: "E, mother (father), but when you depart, who shall remain? Now I am left behind, a vagabond of the mat. I am a wanderer. I have a dirty body, on the way without kandu-prohibition. I am like a thin strip of cloth in front. Those who stand chatting say, those who are sitting say, I have a body to laugh at and a plank to dance upon, to eat upon, to step on. U, but it makes no difference, go your way, father, they have stopped selling you retail. Ba Nkanzi nkokola (the Nkanzians), they have ruled, they have planted nsanda rubber tree." "E, mother, why have you left me behind? E, mother, why have you left me here? How shall I stay behind and wander about, mother? Mother, where am I, mother? Mother, the road they have led me on is the road of tribulation, mother. The road follows none, otherwise I should have followed you, mother. Who will explain this for me? Are you two, then, you two, mother? The one who follows, will see death, may you be alone. The dirt of the back has died with you."

"Mother, now I shall go away to mabila nsongo (where suffering excels). I shall not marry, I shall not be named, father or mother. I have no mother. I have no brother. Mother, mother, I am dying in ashes. E, it makes no difference, mother, may they go their way. I am left, the difficulty is left behind. You have gone, the difficulties have gone with you. Do you go! We shall see each other, it is me that they will continue to look at." A woman once came and bewailed the deceased KI HYANGU. Then she would complain in this wise: "E, HYANGU, go your way! To whom shall I say this? E, KIMBEMBE, go your way then! To whom shall I say this? E-e-e-e HYANGU, go your way then! Tell me the children's things, they who first got there. KIMBEMBE and BATETE or your mother's thing, that was left behind here on earth, he has become Nzambi's vagabond."

The sick person's lament: "A, yambula dyau (leave it), a certain one I have dreamed of. U-u, it is all the same. May they act, for when they have swept away an amount of ash they sweep again. Nzambi the powerful shall blow upon me, what is it? You look at me. U-u, if I should die, you must stay behind to see it. It is all the same, you shall think of me there. Sometimes! Everything thence they have been blowing upon me. Now I shall not survive. The plain where they have bewailed their neighbour they have now hoed clean, but it is all the same, for those who have gone before and opened the way in the country, where are they?" In truth they said a proverb: "If you are going to take food, go out of the way of the smoke!"

"E, you have no brother, you have no kanda, you have none who might follow you. In truth, he has died once for all at the ash. It is all the same, it has become indifferent, for to die is to have died. It is to rot, are you afraid of that? U-u, I have stopped lamenting, it is finished. Lamentation departs with me to maluta nsongo (= mabila nsongo), to father and mother." "My own things, that I shall leave behind, use them rightly, or you will be unpleasantly surprised. Tell me, can you not help me rightly? O, where the diligent one (sadi) is rotting, may they go over there! When he has finished speaking, wrath comes to an end; he gets nothing more to say."

A dying person might also say: "You who will remain behind, take good care of my nzo, look after my children well and do not treat them just anyhow. If you do not do this, I shall fetch you, and you will not become old here on earth. Wrap me up well in the cloth that I leave, and shoot off my gunpowder. Hold lamentations after me and help my widows. Bring up the boys well in the village square where you eat." These and many other admonishments might be made by the dying man to his people. Finally, he might perhaps go on thus: "I have seen So-and-so, who died a while ago, and he has said this or that to me. I have also seen a whole crowd of people in the realm of the dead, old and young women who have danced in the village square. So-and-so does not like the idea of my going there, but those other persons are disputing still more hotly to the effect that I shall be with them. From this I understand that I shall not recover."

Those who sit watching the dying man often say: "Now bandoki will sell him to their land, they will devour him and carry him to the woods. They have left his likeness here on the papyrus mat, he who is lying ill and pretending to die." When he has died, they say: "Now he is sold where they went to sell him." Others say: "Did you see tadi nti (tree of stone or iron), which never rots? You strong one, now you are dead and their land is desolate. May they continue to praise, may they continue in long life, when you, the growing (tree), have died." Others greet those who have died before. In the songs, when they are bewailing the deceased, they utter their praises to honour the dead. They may also tell him what he is to say to those who have died before him.

The treatment meted out to the dying or the deceased depends in many cases whether they consider that it will be, or is, a bad or a good death. A bad death is characterized by, amongst other things, the sick and moribund quarreling with those about

them, staring at them, soiling themselves with excrement, having severe pains and a long death agony. If, after a man has given up the ghost, his body, fingers and legs twitch or his mouth cavity is black, it is believed that he has been shot with nkisi-guns, he is a ndoki. The same is believed if he can not speak properly when dying. One who is dying and turns his back to the wall, and remains thus, will have a bad death. To die on one's stomach with open eyes, to be uneasy and to call on the dead and living implies a very evil death. To die with one's hands over one's face or to die in the sitting position is a very shameful death.

One who dies with grinning teeth and staring eyes has a very bad death. Insanity with violent outbursts is also a sign of a bad death. Such a death was considered to be retribution for the evil deeds of the deceased, and the kanda of such a one would accordingly have no good feelings for him while he was dying or when he was dead. As a rule a nganga would be summoned to smell out the cause of the death and to protect the survivors from being snatched away through a sudden death by the deceased. The nganga shaves the hair from the brow of the dead person, cuts his finger-nails and toe-nails and puts everything in a Nkosi or in a nkisi of joy (i.e. of insanity), in order thus to give guidance to the nkisi's investigation or vengeance.

It is considered to be a good death, on the other hand, if the person dies in silence and stillness, has been peaceful, excretes properly. If he is lying on his back with outstretched legs and arms at his sides, on his hips or on his heart, and if he is not lying uneasily with open eyes, he is said to die a glad death. When a person dies a streamer is fixed to the roof of the house where the deceased is lying, so that no one will enter by mistake.

When death supervenes someone at once closes the eyes of the deceased and binds a white strip of cloth or the like over them to cover the nsoni za fwa (shame of death), and the women immediately pull the fingers till the joints crack and shake the whole body to prevent its stiffening. Before the joints have stiffened the arms and legs are properly disposed. In many cases the deceased is rubbed with palm-oil and nkula-red, to prevent the limbs from stiffening and keep them supple. Then the corpse is covered with cloth or blankets, and if the deceased was married the corpse is lulled in the lap of the surviving spouse. Sometimes the service of lulling the corpse is done by the sisters of the surviving husband.

In connection with the preparation of the corpse the entire body is washed, brow

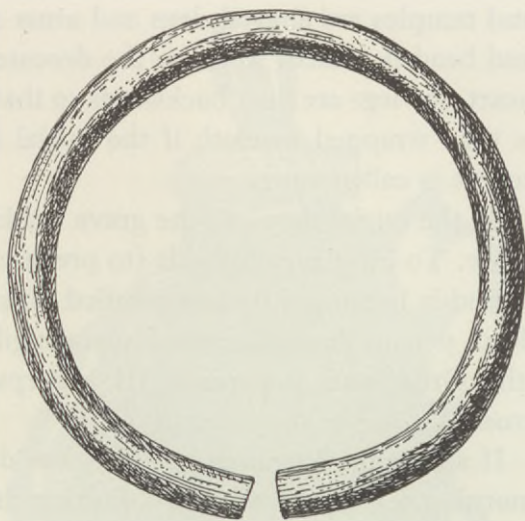


Fig. 23. A, Iron ring, belonging to a wizard who was burnt, Sundi in Mukimbungu (Laman 478).

and temples are shaved, legs and arms are besmeared with red pomade, and the rings and bead necklaces worn by the deceased are put on. The arms are disposed over the heart, the legs are bent backwards so that the heels reach the rump, and the dead person is then wrapped in cloth if the burial is to take place soon. To bathe and shroud a corpse is called sunga.

At the burial they call the grave "tadi (the stone) that is dug out", that is to dig the grave. To bury is called yala (to prepare the bed) or zyama (to put down into). The deceased is honoured by being called Nzambi or Nakongo. Afterwards they say that the dead person has gone to Kutwazingila (where we shall remain), i.e. to mpungu (the Great one, the grave). If a corpse is to be dried, the legs are stretched out or crossed.

If a dikongo (paramount chief) has died in Mayombe he must be taken out on the morning of the following day. During the night those who so desire may dance, so that the chief will not be angered on his journey to the grave. If they do not dance they tinkle with sangwa-bells and clap their hands; in the morning they beat drums and perform all kinds of antics, so that the chief will not set off in wrath and sorrow to the woods and take others with him.

If the deceased has been a great nganga with many minkisi, the house in which the corpse is laid must be set apart and sanctified. For this purpose they take stalks of matutu-grass, stuff them with gunpowder and shot and bless them. They are then buried in the house, so that the ndoki that has devoured him or that wants to try and take the remains of the nganga in the coffin will be shot by the guns (the stalks of grass). The corpse is kept in the house until the day of the burial. Such matutu-tubes are also placed around the grave, so that bandoki cannot come and take his kinyumba-spirit and bewitch his possessions etc.

A nganga who has died may be honoured through his minkisi. When the women are to bewail him they first receive the law for his minkisi and their songs. Sometimes they begin like this: "They weep, they weep, they laugh, they laugh, tu kyaku (the laughter). She has gone to give birth to her children, whence the river comes." They then strike their hands together kwo-kwo, eya-eya, kwo-kwo, eya-eya, and after this sing his favourite songs.

If a venerable person, chief, man or woman has died, everyone must be very silent. No one may utter a word. Everybody must lie outside the house, perhaps for two konzo-days. The women are in the mourning house to weep and the men at the boko-place to shoot and receive burial gifts. The men weep most on the day someone has died and the day following.

Days of weeping and mourning differ widely. The more honoured and venerable the deceased has been, the longer he will be mourned. The period may be a couple of weeks, a month or much more. In many cases a tall palm may be cut down, and with the wood from this the mourners keep up a fire at which to warm themselves. When the palm has been consumed by the fire the period of weeping and mourning is at an end. When a

widow is to bewail her husband, she ought to be able to repeat her husband's *mvila* with its name-device, for if she makes a mistake here the people may laugh at her.

When the fowls crow for the first time the lamentation begins. The widow weeps then and laments for a time. When the darkness has been scattered and the sun has appeared she must weep again. When the sun is at the zenith it is time to weep once more. Thus, for periods, she weeps until the sun has set. If she does not weep the others may torment her. The widow or widows must bewail the husband for what they have received from him, for otherwise his *kanda* will say: "Whose, then, is that you have eaten?" If, on the other hand, it is a wife who has died, it is not incumbent upon the husband to demonstrate his sorrow in this way.

The widows of a chief or other venerable person are tormented in many ways during the period of lamentation. To start with, they may not leave the house except to relieve themselves just behind it. On these occasions they must crouch low as they walk and may not look about them or talk. If it is necessary to communicate they may whisper. They must lull the corpse and lay their foreheads against the head of the deceased. The favourite wife must have her couch by the side of the deceased, the others at the head and legs. They may not wash and bathe, but must dress in mourning and rub black *ndoba*-grease in their hair and on their faces etc. Bracelets and ankle-rings that cannot be taken off are covered with strips of dark cloth.

If, up in Bwende, someone has died during the night and the corpse is not immediately wrapped in a shroud, the wife or wives (husband) may be with the deceased as when he (she) was alive. When the corpse is lying on the mat the widow may lie down and encircle it with her arms, as they had been wont to lie together. She may also put her mouth to that of the deceased. If the widow is in the sitting position she takes the head of the deceased on her lap. She may not shirk this duty, or her late husband's *kanda* may punish and insult her, or even drive her out. In addition to this, she will have to make a placatory present.

The husband's *kanda* torment the widows in several ways. Thus, for instance, they are not given permission to start smoking until they have "bought" their pipes, i.e.

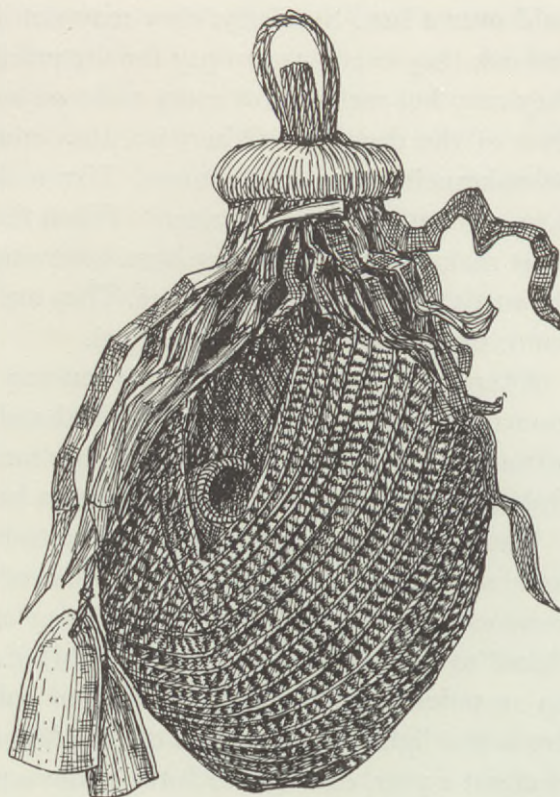


Fig. 24. *Nkisi Koko Bondo, Sundi in Lolo (Laman 1076).*

paid over a hen. Similarly, they may not lie on a mat if they have not "bought" this. Indeed, they even have to pay for the privilege of washing their hands. However many they may be, each widow must make payment of a hen to the older and younger relatives of the deceased. Otherwise, they must lie on the bare ground, on the shells of palm-kernels or on small stones. This is done so that they may pay back "what they have consumed in the marriage". When the mourning period is at an end each of them must make payment of three hens before they are allowed to go so far that they can see the roads leading in to the village. They are not allowed to visit the market, on the other hand, until after the nkungi-festival.

After the burial a widow may often stay indoors for a period of up to about a year, mourning and bewailing her late husband and with her face greased with mourning pomade. If she goes out she covers her face and is not permitted to speak to any man. Only her kanda has the right to address her.

The drying of a corpse is carried out to honour the deceased and to prevent the body from rotting. As a rule, only the corpses of chiefs or, sometimes, spouses, are dried. In these cases the period of mourning goes on as long as the corpse is being dried. It is placed to dry in a kind of coffin (kimbi) of palm-ribs with spaces between, which is set up on poles or an elevated platform of palm-ribs under which a fire may be made. A fire is also lighted on the sides of the platform. The drying proceeds slowly for a period of about a year, during which the widows must tend the fire and submit to still stricter regulations than otherwise. The dripping of fat from the corpse into the fire, the stench and the swarms of blue-bottles that collect make it a terrible trial for the widows to eat and spend their time in the mummification hut. In order to prevent the blue-bottles from laying eggs, a fire is kept up also at the gable-end of the roof, and large clusters of staminate blooms from palms are put on to make a lot of smoke. In addition to this, the widows are armed with twigs with which to drive away the blue-bottles.

As long as the corpse is kept in the house wailing and lamentation is kept up as at the actual death. It is very loud, with cries and laments. When members of the kanda and friends arrive the cries become stronger and louder. The men also weep then. This may, moreover, be kept up for a time, if the deceased has been much loved. Otherwise, it is the widows and other female relatives who weep during the mourning period. Widows and close relatives come and weep every morning and evening, and also at other times. Women coming on a visit weep for a decent interval and then return home to their villages.

Some examples of lamentations are as follows: "A great storm, I thought that which remained was the rainbow, a great storm took my kanda with it through boasting." "Sweep clean where our chiefs dance, sweep clean!" "Konko (the grasshopper), yaaya (elder brother), I weep, I weep, e Konko yaaya. To Konko one has gone to carve the house at Maza ma Nkenge (the water at Nkenge), I weep, I weep, e Konko yaaya." During the lamentations they may also beat drums and gongs in the house where the deceased chief is being honoured.

The funeral takes place, in the majority of cases, as soon after the death as the kanda has been apprised of it, the corpse has been wrapped in a shroud and food etc. has been collected. If the deceased is one of "Nzambi's poor", who has not been able to acquire any possessions, he is shrouded in a papyrus mat, which is wound about head and feet before the body is lowered into the grave. If the deceased has been ill for a long time, has wasted away and been unable to help himself, or if he has been insane and violent, the people tire of him and he is neither lamented nor bewailed.

The shrouding of the corpse is more or less according to the fortune of the deceased and his kanda. It is the tradition at the burial to shoot off the gunpowder that has been left or that has been given by his kanda. Old guns are generally used. They are placed with the butt in the earth and the one shot after the other is then fired.

In several tracts the hair is shaved off the corpse just before the burial. The task is performed by the brothers-in-law of the deceased, who also cut his nails. They then take a palm-kernel in which a hole has been gnawed by the ngoni-rat and put into the hole the hair, the nail-parings and the dirt that has been scraped from the body. The palm-kernel must be placed at the foot of nti kaliki (the tree that does not sleep), i.e. the nsamvi-tree, which is full of ant-nests. Here are laid also other articles pertaining to the widowhood, such as, for example, the mat.

The following morning, when the burial is performed, the widow (or widower) must go and place herself (himself) at the forking of the road to "stop the corpse". She (he) is then given a knife with which to make a little hole at the end of the coffin and must take the pole with which it is being carried and lift it. She (he) then throws water on the corpse and strews palm-kernels, saying: "Go to your people who have gone tither before." She (he) then goes back to the house at once to lie down on the mat upon which she (he) has lain until the shot is heard from the burial place, for then it is known that the corpse has been lowered into the grave.

When those who have buried the corpse return, a boy must step over their legs. They may not touch or bump against the boy at all. At dawn the widow (widower) must go with a water-calabash to all forkings of the road and sing: "My husband (wife) has called upon me, my husband (wife). My husband (wife), I have heard the Kongo-call, my husband (wife)" and so forth. As soon as the song is ended she (he) smashes the calabash at the forking of the road along which the corpse has been taken.

If the imminent death of a paramount chief or ntinu has been anticipated by strangling, the bamayaala (councillors) cut off hair and nails and place these in a special kimbenza-chest of palm-ribs. The corpse is wrapped up with nkwala-mats and is buried the same night in a marsh, for none may smell the odour of a ntinu. If he is not buried in this way he will take a large number of the people with him into the realm of the dead. In the kimbenza-chest is placed also a very thin pig, which is shrouded and dried like the corpses of influential men for one to two years.

An honoured and rich person is shrouded in a number of cloths and blankets and a great feast with dancing, beating of drums and music is held. Sometimes a nyombo

may be swathed to enormous size, as when a corpse is dried. If a man has died, all the male members of the kanda must contribute pieces of cloth for the shroud, some five, others six or ten. They must also collect gunpowder for the salvoes fired at the funeral. Some give a keg, others five or six, according to their means. Also those who have got a wife from the kanda must give cloth for the shroud. When everything is collected in the house where the corpse is lying it must be counted and divided into two heaps. One of these is to be used for the shroud and the other is saved for the purchase of palm-wine. Other gifts, such as pigs, goats, bananas, pisang etc., are put aside for the nkungi-feast, as payment for those who have made contributions towards the grave-clothes (fig. 2 and pl. 1).

When the corpse is to be shrouded a palm-rib is first placed nearest the deceased, and then all the cloths and blankets intended for the purpose are wound about the body. If the deceased has left much cloth they may be kept occupied for several days. Finally they must sew together some of the cloths or else tie everything up with cords and rope. Several hundred pieces of cloth may sometimes be used. That a body is shrouded with so much cloth is due to the desire to show that the deceased and his kanda have been very rich. Further, the cloth he takes with him into the grave is supposed to show those who dwell in the realm of the dead that the deceased is very rich, so that they, too, may honour him.

At ordinary burials in other places a sort of kimbi-chest is made. The bottom of this chest consists of six palm-ribs and the sides are made of six or seven of the same. At the ends, two of the longitudinal ribs are allowed to project and are then bent over. These are then firmly tied with bole-knots of mpunga-rope. The bottom is also attached to the side-pieces with bole-knots. The chest is firm and stable, like a trunk without a lid. Nkwala-mats are placed in the chest. The corpse is wrapped in the shrouding cloths and placed in the chest or coffin. Such a coffin is called a kimbenza.

Whether the body has been dried or not, a rich chief may be swathed to make a huge figure with head and arms, and in this case skilful corpse-swathers are sent for. They come and view the corpse, look at the face, sew how the teeth are filed and how the body is tattooed and so forth. Then they set about swathing it. No other persons may be present. They first bind a number of nkwala-mats about the corpse and then stretch out the arms, one pointing forward and the other upward. Red blanketing or a reddish cloth is now wound round the whole to give a living impression. A well-made head with a cap is set on top, with eyes and mouth and clearly visible teeth. Figures corresponding to the tattooing on the deceased are made on the face and on the body. If the man has been a hunter a gun is set on the shoulder on the day of the burial. Everything is made with as much versimilitude as possible. At the burial the nyombo is danced with at home and at the forkings of the road on the way to the grave. "The dry legs can of course not dance themselves."

In the meantime the digging of the grave is begun, for when the swathing is finished the corpse must be buried. Such a grave must be dug very deep, for the corpse is buried

in the standing or sitting position, unlike ordinary corpses, which are buried in the horizontal position. The depth varies in many cases, according to the wealth or importance of the deceased. Poor persons are given scarcely any grave. Otherwise, the grave is as a rule as deep as a man's height. The more considerable graves are so deep that the diggers have to be hoisted up with ropes; the earth is hoisted up in baskets. For the digging they use sharp wooden spits of mbota-wood.

Those who dig the grave are the brothers-in-law and other relatives, both men and women, the latter emptying out the earth and so forth. If any member of the dead person's kanda does not appear there is sorrow among the mourners, for this is a sign of disrespect to the deceased, and he may then come and scorn the corpse at the moment of burial. Moreover, those who do not attend the funeral will miss the blessing of the deceased, for those present are given a part of the cloth left over from the swathing, which is considered tantamount to the blessing of the dead man.

No coffin is made for such big corpses. They are transported to the grave either by being carried by several men on a broad hoed path leading to the burial grove, standing or sitting on bamboo poles, or else in the sitting or prone position on high wheeled biers which are carried or dragged like a waggon. If a goat or a hen crosses the path it must be killed; and if the path goes over a field of manioc the manioc is pulled up by the roots. All wives are carefully watched, for if a woman is raped on the path there can be no lawsuit or punishment in connection herewith, "for Navunda's swine alone shall bathe", and no law then applies. Ordinary corpses are carried on the shoulders of two bearers or on a pole direct to the grave without great ceremony or intermezzos.

On the day of the burial the children and grandchildren of the deceased must all assemble without any exception, as must also those who have taken their spouses from his kanda. The younger children and grandchildren must carry the corpse to the grave. If it is so bulky that it cannot be got through the doorway, the wall is pulled down. On the occasion of a more high class funeral about ten men may precede the corpse to fire off salvoes, followed by others who strike gongs and beat drums. After these comes the crier, who begins the burial songs in which the people join. At the end of the procession there may be also some persons who are to fire shots simultaneously with those at its head. Those carrying the corpse walk a few steps and then stop, as if the deceased was reluctant to go to the grave and wished to return to his home. The one salvo after the other is then fired, and the procession resumes its march to the grave. Such jokes are performed by the children and the grandchildren. Those in front may even turn round with the corpse to go home again. But in this case the very youngest come up to the edge of the road and turn, so to speak, the corpse in the direction of the grave again.

Among the strophes sung again and again on the way to the grave may be mentioned the following: "Ah this, I am a child of this Mayombe!" Or: "Peace nganga! Oh, leave him alone! I am a child of this chief!" Or: "A splendid young man has buried his master." Arrived at the burial place they strike gongs, beat various kinds of drums and

blow trumpets. A lot of gunpowder is shot off and burial chants are sung. When the corpse is lowered into the grave the young people begin to dance; and when the grave is filled in they all return home to the accompaniment of music.

When a nganga dies he is buried beside a watercourse, so that he may feel the coolness of the water and not close the sky for rain. When the fellow-banganga of the deceased (those who have made a nkisi together with him) see that the sky is clouding over for rain they put their thumbs in and go to sleep in another village, for otherwise the deceased may come again and seek them when it rains.

At the grave the nganga concludes his work by cutting the finger-nails and the toenails of the deceased and cutting up the medicines: nkandikila, lunungu lwa nsamba, luyalu and luvemba. He takes nkandikila so that the deceased may kandika (set a watch for) bandoki, lunungu lwa nsamba so that in the realm of the dead he may be able to samba (invoke) the ndoki who has eaten him, luyalu to give him yaala (power) over the bandoki, so that they may die, and luvemba (chalk) to make his eyes so clear (light as chalk) that he may see the bandoki who have eaten him.

When the nganga gets to the grave he loads his gun with gunpowder, the cut-up medicine and the nails of the deceased. When the corpse-bearers begin to arrive the nganga says: "Investigate carefully the question of who has eaten you, whether a male or a female ndoki, whether two or three! Seek, seek, when you get to the place where we shall remain (i.e. in the grave)! Whether they are in a strange village or here in our kanda, pursue our people. E, luyalu overcome all bandoki, ma (see here, i.e. accept, be so good), luvemba make your eyes clear, nkandikila, keep watch at all cross-roads. Wherever they may smell the odour of tobacco, do not forget the odour of lunungu lwa nsamba, sweep, sweep, cut off, cut off, village after village, and then the house-god shall pursue the one among ourselves or the one who is ndoki in other villages." When the nganga has concluded his speech and the corpse is at the grave he fires his shot and begins to run away without looking back. Then all the others begin to shoot, for now they are permitted to do so. The gun fired off by the nganga also contained small stones.

When an important chief is to be buried, all the ceremonies must be performed very slowly. He must thus be carried or dragged to the grave at a very measured pace and the funeral procession rests two or three times on the way even if it is only a short distance. If an animal, for example a pig, a goat or a hen, should happen to touch the coffin it is killed. In many places the singing is not started until the nkungi-feast; in others, again, the funeral takes place with much pomp and to the accompaniment of singing and music.

In the case of a very wealthy person, especially a chief who has bought slaves, one or more of the latter are not infrequently sent down into the grave to receive the corpse and to "lull" it. But when an enormously swathed nyombo is lowered, it holds the slaves fast and the grave is filled in, so that they are buried alive. Many possessions, such as packs of cloth and so forth, are thrown in. All these things are done in order that it may everywhere be known, even in the realm of the dead, how rich the de-

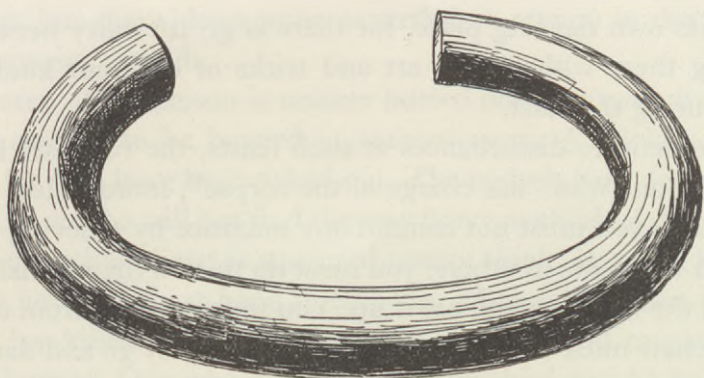


Fig. 25. Foot-ring of brass, Sundi in Kingoyi (Laman 409).

ceased has been. One of the reasons why slaves are made to accompany the deceased into the grave is that in this case he will not so insistently desire those remaining, and will thus not come and fetch them.

If the deceased has by oath arranged for the funeral the day for this is proclaimed in all tracts where members of his kanda are living. On the day of the burial and the day following a very great mourning feast is held; this has rather the character of a festival meal to the accompaniment of dancing and music, and with huge quantities of food and drink. When all the people are assembled, "like the teeth in the mouth of the swine", ngoma and tangala drums are sounded and volleys are fired. The young men and women dance intensively, for the chief was in his life well-known and rich (fig. 4).

When the mourners have returned to the village the slaughtered animals, the many pots with cooked food and the palm-wine are all distributed in the village communities, for every village forms a mess with its chief. The nkungi-feast is often held a long time after the funeral, and in many cases a matondo (thanksgiving) feast is given simultaneously, with return presents to those who have made contributions to the swathing and the burial. If the nkungi-feast is held on the occasion of the funeral, the matondo-feast is given after about a year. The chief of the deceased's kanda must then "wash his hands" of (i.e. pay back) the persons who had given mafundu (presents for the funeral). One who had contributed four or five pieces of mbandu-cloth is given a pig, one who had given two pieces of mbandu-cloth receives a goat. If the contribution was only one or two pieces of cloth the donor will be given four or five hens. It is then the turn of the women who have been smeared with mourning grease. They are given excellent food, drink, new loincloths and cloth instead of the mourning apparel they wore in the mortuary; they are also given the couch on which they were consecrated when the deceased was removed.

The nkungi-feast is held in Bwende, when the nyombo is buried. The latter frequently contains more than one corpse. Apart from the immense quantities of food and drink, several tanda-trumpet choirs are assembled to enhance the feast with music and dancing. Such choirs as well as other crowds come from various quarters, and each

choir is allotted its own dancing place, for there is great rivalry between the choirs to see which among them with music, art and tricks of different kinds can attract the greatest crowd during the feast.

As there are sometimes disturbances at such feasts, the rules are laid down for the participants by the one who "has charge of the corpse", more or less as follows: "Now you have come here, you must not commit any nuisance by relieving yourselves on the village paths or at the doors of others; you must do this on the rubbish-heap, where the pigs will come in the morning and eat it up. You must not run from one dancing space to another, each choir must have its own. We villagers may go and dance where we like as long as we do not start any quarrels and disputes. None may commit adultery with the womenfolk of others."

The music now starts. At intervals the musiciens are given food and drink by the village chief. In the morning they are allowed to rest if they wish to do so, but later in the forenoon the choirs begin again, each trying to excel the others. The choir which attracts the biggest crowd wins. But the others then try to attract the crowd with all kinds of tricks. Sometimes, for instance, the chorists may have put nsombe-larvæ in a banana-plantation nearby, and some of them then pretend they are going to find the grubs in the bananas and not in the palms, where they are otherwise to be found. Other chorists climb the palm without a climbing loop, bite the top off and throw it down; another again, may stand on his head on the ground and throw his legs around a palm. Others will make a score in their tongue and then heal it. One or another performs a dance with a kayi-nkibi, which resembles a human head and has a big nose, eye-cavities and mouth-aperture. A pipe is inserted in the latter and the entire head is covered with a parti-coloured cloth.

If a tanda-choir loses its crowd the chorists may visit the houses in the villages and dance there to get ntooba-stew in return. People keep on arriving from the villages, bringing with them much palm-wine and many presents. In return they are given pots of food containing, inter alia, fishes or rats. The trumpeters also have their recompense. The feast is held to honour the deceased, and the rumour of it goes out in all directions. An end is herewith made of the mourning, and mirth and merriment are reinstated as before. Many such big nkungi-feasts are remembered, and especially does this apply to one that was held for a very well-known, kind and capable woman named NDANDA. This lasted for four days, and in all the countryside round about the roads were full of people going to take part in the feast with palm-wine and enormous quantities of food. Dancing was going on all the time. Several kegs of gunpowder were shot off. Her brother NABUKUTA was very rich.

If a person has taken his own life he is buried with the same honours as if he had died a "natural" death; and the same applies also to one who is drowned or devoured by wild beasts. In these cases the mourners express their sorrow with lamentations and weeping and by firing salvoes. Where the deceased has been drowned or carried off by wild animals he can of course not be seen, and the weeping and lamentation is there-

fore not so violent; but the widows must nevertheless remain in the house of the deceased for the mourning period.

One who has eaten nkasa-poison is neither buried nor mourned, but is often cut up in pieces like an animal, to be burned or thrown away. A ndoki may, however, be buried as soon as his eyes have been poked out. The body is bent double, with the head against the chest, so that he will not find the way home or think of devouring his people in the village; for one whose heart is squeezed cannot think. If a man has been killed in a fight and he has no comrade at hand to take him off the field, then this may be done by the man who has killed him. If his kanda is not prepared to pay ransom for the corpse it will be burned. One who murders a village chief may be burned, after being tortured and then put to death. His ears, fingers, lips and nose are cut off and he is made to eat them. Sometimes such a criminal may also be buried alive under the chief's corpse.

One who has committed a crime at the market-place is "planted", and his relatives must dig the grave. All the chiefs from the surrounding countryside together with their people and folk from other villages assemble for the burial. The doomed man is taken to the edge of the grave. Cotton-wool is stuffed in his ears so that he may not hear what is said. He is then given a pot of yuuma with meat to eat and palm-wine to drink, after which the market-chief begins to dance. The criminal is then buried alive. Those punished in this way are terribly afraid. Their shrieks may be heard for two or three days under the ground before they die.

Leepers, who are considered unclean, are as a rule flung into a ravine or into a cave. If the person dying of this disease is one held in high honour, earth is taken from a ravine and placed in the coffin before the corpse, after which the whole is covered with cloths. He is then considered to have been buried in a ravine. Slaves and the children of slaves are buried like other people with the usual honours, unless they have been looked upon as sickly and inferior slaves, in which case the burial will be according. Children must be well swathed, and a first-born child is buried just behind the house, but it will not be lamented, as its name was not known and famous.

The appearance of an enclosed burial place where chiefs have been buried is very remarkable, for the burial mounds are adorned with all sorts of articles, such as porcelain figures, guns, umbrellas, powder-kegs and elephant-tusks. The porcelain articles may comprise mugs (with holes knocked in the bottom, to prevent their being stolen), plates, cooking utensils, jugs, various porcelain figurines and the like that have been bought at the coast to adorn the graves and indicate the wealth of the deceased. It is also thought that all this may be used after death. All persons in the kanda of the deceased must put something on the grave. Immediately after the burial food is put out, for when the deceased has been transformed into a nkuyu-spirit he can eat this; and for the same reason palm-wine is poured out over the grave. In connection herewith, the mourners also drank palm-wine at the grave, where the deceased is conceived to live. The gunpowder kegs are a proof of the amount of powder shot off at the burial.

The many salvoes are in part a way of honouring the dead man, and in part a sign to the villages in the vicinity that there has been a death.

Over individual graves, especially higher up country, where the head of the nzo is buried in the vicinity, a grass roof or little hut is erected. Palm-wine, meat and other food are then set out on the grave. In this way the survivors wish chiefly to assure themselves of good dreams and the aid and blessing of the deceased. For the same reason the deceased may often be buried in the house where the palm-wine is drunk, so that he may not be forgotten. A whole calabash of wine may be poured out over the grave.

Mourning signs of various kinds are used. Almost everywhere ndoba (a black mourning grease or pomade) is applied. In certain tracts of Mayombe and in the French Congo the natives also use chalk, with which the entire body is smeared. Also on the burial mound the wooden figures etc. set out are smeared with chalk. Ndoba is made of burnt peanuts which are pounded up with charcoal and mixed with palm-oil. The hair is plentifully besmeared with this and may then not be shaved or cut during the period of mourning. It may be applied to the face and other parts of the body, too, to manifest different degrees of mourning. All adornments are taken off, but rings and ornaments that cannot be removed must be covered with wrappings to prevent their shining (pl. 2).

Both husband and wife wear such signs of mourning, as do also the nearest of kin. In addition to this, the women must sit round the corpse and weep during the whole period of mourning, while the men may go about their daily work and only give themselves up to sorrow for a week or three or four days. If a husband mourns his wife very deeply he may sit still in his house for a longer period and refrain from remarrying for a long time. As a sign of his sorrow he may then let his hair grow and leave it unkempt for a whole year. Only when it has been shaven off can he consider remarrying, dress well, wash his face, and chat and joke with young women.

Widows may often have quite a tolerable time of it during the mourning period if their kanda may bring them food; and also the husband's kanda may come with food and palm-wine. Sometimes the widows may be allowed to sit and plait baskets. After the mourning period they are permitted to go home to their village, if they are not inherited by the husband's kanda. In the former case the marriage property is paid back to the husband's kanda. If a corpse is lying in a house a strip of cloth or the like may often be hung over the roof as a sign of mourning; no one is then allowed to enter.

If the deceased has been a well-known and honoured person, his grave and those of his kanda are well looked after, the grass being hoed away between the mounds and the graves cleaned up and tended with every possible care. In such cases several salvoes are fired to honour the deceased. Food is set out on the graves and palm-wine is poured into mugs placed there for the purpose. The grave may sometimes be situated quite near the home, and food and palm-wine will then be set out regularly for a long time, with prayers for the blessing of the deceased. In connection with hunting and harvesting both those newly deceased and the most prominent persons belonging to the kanda are given part of the catch and the harvest.

Sometimes manioc roots and peanuts etc. are pulled up to be given to the dead person in the grave, so that he may have something to eat. If misfortune should supervene, bad luck in connection with the hunt, the harvest and so forth, and the nganga has asserted that this is on account of lack of reverence for the dead, the whole kanda goes to the grave to sacrifice.

If it is necessary to pass the place of burial, a leaf is thrown upon it with a prayer in which the safety of the passer-by is implored. If a corpse has been swathed and buried but has no peace in the grave, and comes and rides the people in the village with *finá* (nightmare), the nganga may find this out by smelling and ecstasy. He then takes the people with him with loud shrieks and says: "You who have owned the corpse there in the grave, do you want us to fire shots with stones into the grave there or light a fire on the mound, or do you want us to take it up?" They reply: "Take it up, and we will unwind it and look at it and then burn it up." They thereupon disinter the corpse, unwind the *nkwala*-mats and the cloth in which it is swathed, only leaving that which is mouldy. Wood is now put on the corpse and ignited, so that it is burned up. The winding cloth is carefully washed and sometimes sold on the market. Many chiefs have acted in this manner.

A corpse may be buried twice in different graves if the deceased has first been buried elsewhere than in the kanda's burial ground. He finds no peace there, for the other persons buried in this place persecute him. He therefore returns to his village and makes the villagers uneasy by shaking their houses at night. The deceased may keep this up for years, and finally he is disinterred and buried where he belongs. When this has been done the unrest in the village comes to an end.

Formerly, a stranger might not be buried in a local burial ground. Or in this case he had to forfeit a pig. Also if a person was buried quite alone in a solitary place, there was the risk that the dead man might come to the village and make the villagers uneasy, to let them know he wished to be buried among others.

CHAPTER VI

Ownership

The right of ownership to movables in the home of a married couple is not held in common, each party having a title to those items which he or she has brought to the home. Thus the wife disposes over the pots and other clay vessels, the baskets, dishes and calabashes that she has bought or made, and the husband has the title to the spoons, plates and mugs that he has provided as well as to his wife's hoe. It is his duty to buy this last-mentioned item, whereby he gets a certain right to the harvest resulting from the work with the hoe in question. This is considered to belong to the wife, but the husband has the right to take it back. Knives and edged tools belong to the husband, as do also the implements having to do with the tapping of palm-wine. The wife also possesses some tools for the manufacture of articles of clay and basket-work and the like; but these are extremely few in number. If both parties are in harmony the husband does not claim exclusive right to the use of his things, and his wife may borrow them whenever she needs them. The bed and its accessories are considered to belong to the husband.

The harvest is shared in proportion to the part that the man and his wife have sown. Thus the former may not go and take of the fruits of his wife's work as he thinks fit. As regards the preparation and consumption of the food, however, they have a common part in the results of each other's work. From this it follows that the wife has the right to give a part of her harvest to her brothers and sisters or to her friends. As a rule the gift is then made in the form of an already prepared palm-oil stew or the like, and in return she may receive e.g. a fish, meat or a piece of cloth. The husband, of course, disposes of his share in the harvest in the same way. Both the wife and the husband must also think of their father's and their makanda's right sometimes to taste the result of the harvest; this applies not least to the bag after fishing or hunting. Consequently, as regards the sale of produce, each may only sell the results of his or her own work; and this applies also to rearing of domestic animals.

Even if the husband has the title to those possessions he has acquired through work or barter, these may nevertheless, since he is a member of his kanda, in several cases also be used by the head of the latter. As a rule, the wife immediately hands over her profits to her elder brother or to the chief of her kanda. The profits from work may thus

be owned both individually by the mother's nzo or by the kanda in its entirety. If there are friendly relations between a mother's children they have everything in common and help one another in case of need. The eldest or next eldest brother keeps the others' possessions in his house and is the spokesman for his brothers and sisters.¹ He should, however, carefully distinguish between his own and the others' possessions in order to see what each can acquire. He should also teach the younger ones how best to improve their property. The chief of the kanda frequently, for the rest, pays fines for relatives who have lost court cases and lays out the necessary funds in connection with the contraction of marriage.

The husband's and the wife's chief advantage, it might be said, deriving from the profit from their work lies in the right to use this to further in the best way the common economy of their respective makanda. In connection with odd jobs the younger members may borrow and use the belongings of the chief of the kanda. For tools and therewith comparable articles no charge is made, though a man may possibly give a little palm-wine in return. A woman is not compensated. The chief's cap and other signs of dignity may of course not be lent, and no unauthorized person, for the rest, has the right to enter the house of a paramount chief.

The slaves and members of their families are kept under a certain supervision, as they are able to work and earn; but, at least to begin with, they are allowed to keep something for themselves. The slaves who are sensible and diligent and who improve their master's property and obey his instructions may rise to high dignities. But if such an one should begin to rival his master in wealth, power and the desire to rule he may be degraded. Disobedient slaves may be put in the pillory or fettered.

The principle for the right of ownership of real estate and slaves, whether the latter have sought protection or are prisoners of war, is the same as for loose chattels, i.e. the right belongs as well to the owner as to his kanda through its chief. They are thus owners with a common responsibility if anything should be disposed of through purchase or to meet a debt. Houses are considered to be more in the way of private property, while land, forest and fruit-trees belong as a rule entirely to the kanda. It often happens, however, that the land, forest and fruit-trees are shared out very carefully between the different nzo, with very definite boundaries.

The right of ownership is thus in its nature both private and collective, as the individual is also a member of his kanda. According to the nature of the property, however, there are certain variations. The ground surrounding the village belongs to the village, either because it was bought by the earlier settlers when they moved in, or because those moving in were the first to settle there. If it is a matter of extensive and fruitful regions, anybody at all may begin to clear and till the soil. Those who begin often make hacks in the ground with their hoes and tie the blades of grass together to show that the soil has been claimed. But since disputes may arise in this connection the chief measures off the plots to be allotted to the different households of the village.

¹ Among the things which are kept in common may be noted seed, domestic animals, cloth and gunpowder.

If anyone wishes to purchase land, a palm grove or forest, the boundaries are carefully pointed out in the presence of witnesses and zinzonzi, and the settlement is made in the presence of all, so that the purchase may not give rise to future legal squabbles. Sometimes a palm grove is sold when the tapper has died, if the latter has been a great nganga whose kinkonko-animal perhaps lives there.¹ Such a palm grove might then sometimes be bought collectively by one kanda.

If there is much discord and quarrelling in a village a nzo that does not feel at home there may return to the country of its paternal or maternal grandparents and ask to be allowed to buy a piece of land there. The sellers may demand, amongst other things, a human being and a pack of cloth. The boundaries are laid down, and if the immigrating nzo's leader wishes to be appointed chief he must pay the usual fee to the chiefs who are to invest him with a chief's rights. In connection with sales and the laying down of boundaries the blade of a knife is often driven into the great nkisi Nkondi to prevent anyone from contravening the agreements made. The same procedure is adopted also if it is forbidden to cut down fruit-trees. If anyone contests a person's right of ownership the case is often decided with the help of mbundu-poison or some other ordeal. If a village is to be moved and rebuilt elsewhere, the matter is decided by the chief, the elders and a nganga.

In the old days the village boundaries were laid down very carefully. As a rule they followed the watercourses and the woods. That which is left by a chief should be kept in common under the one who is the eldest. If for some reason this is not possible the effects must be shared out among the heirs. If anyone enters another's palm grove without permission, to tap wine, or trespasses on another's field, to cultivate the same, this results in a big lawsuit, and it is left to the bakisi to afflict the trespasser with sickness, for his act is regarded as a regular theft.

The boundary round tilled soil is often marked by strewing the weeds that have been pulled up from the latter around it. Tilled soil always belongs to the person who cultivates it. There is one exception to this rule, inasmuch as the women sometimes own fields collectively, both in connection with the sowing and the harvest. Those areas, whether tillable soil or groves with palms or native fruit-trees, which may be sold to nzo and makanda moving into the district are owned collectively.

Everything that is owned by the kanda is also inherited within the same. The head of the kanda is the responsible heir to the property of the kanda. Even the possessions belonging to certain members of the kanda are used for the good of the whole kanda. In case of disputes on such occasions the matter is decided in a lawsuit.

Where a watercourse constitutes a boundary between different owners none of them may dam it up or put out bucks there or drain it in order to catch fish without a previous agreement. The boundary is considered to run in the middle of the stream or lake as the case may be. The older men show the youngsters where the boundaries run between

¹ Animal into which the soul of a human being, e.g. of a wizard, is believed to transform itself.

the properties. All boundaries and all property are respected within the kanda. If outsiders fail to show due respect the result is a lawsuit or in the worst case war. The boundaries have, certainly, no religious character; but they are nonetheless often protected magically with minkisi or amulets, so that whoever violates them may be punished. Private boundaries (round fields, fruit-trees and palms etc.) are of course protected in the same way.

The private right of ownership does not follow any scale of social rank, and every individual may retain what he has acquired through inheritance or work. The slaves may be allowed to retain and increase their possessions on condition that their owners are voluntarily given their tribute or, if necessary, take this by force. One consequence of this social system is of course that the richest individuals are as a rule to be found among the oldest. They are in return, however, responsible for the younger ones who through their activities are able to profit their elder brothers and superiors by themselves becoming rich. Thus everything contributes to the wealth of the kanda, and upon this is based its reputation and power.

The right of ownership thus constitutes an inheritance from the ancestors. It has been preserved by the power of tradition through the generations, and upon it is based the finding in lawsuits in debatable cases.

The first nzo to move in claimed the land, but they were followed by others who either bought certain areas from their predecessors or took them by force or through fraud. In most cases the newcomers got a site upon which to settle, and if they multiplied they bought more ground in the district.

The difference between owning a thing and having the right to use it is often considerable. A gun, for example, is owned by a chief, an elder or a rich man, but it may be used by anyone at all among the younger men who happens to be a good hunter. But the person owning the gun must have his share of the bag. Several men may also buy a gun jointly, and each then gets his share of what is killed. If the hunter kills an animal without using a dog, he and the owner of the gun share alike. If a group of marksmen take part in the hunt, the hunter with the borrowed gun must hand over his share of what is shot to the owner of the gun, who will then reward him as he thinks fit.

A palm grove may sometimes be loaned on similar conditions, if the owner has none of his people there who are able to tap the wine. By way of compensation the owner then gets a small calabash of palm-wine every day. If the tapper sells the palm-wine the money must be shared equally; if he withholds the owner's share the tapper is put in the stocks. Similar rules apply in connection with a canoe owner. The ferry dues are



Fig. 26. Cupping horn (*nsumuku*), Sundi in Kingoyi (Laman 502).

shared between the ferrymen and the owner or owners of the canoe. If another person than the owner rears animals, both the former and the latter share the offspring.

Hunting and fishing rights belong to all who live within the domains of the village and the kanda. On the other hand, unauthorized persons are forbidden to fish in those ponds in which someone is raising fish by throwing spawn into them. Only those who have planted the trees or who have acquired them through purchase or inheritance have the right to the fruit. The nsafu-trees are very valuable, especially those which are well planted and cared for. When the time is ripe to pluck the first fruit the chief gets the first of it to eat. Only after this does the great day come when all the fruit is plucked and shared within the kanda. In certain very good nsafu-trees the owner sometimes places amulets which show that it is forbidden to pluck their fruit. The fruits from wild trees, on the other hand, may be plucked by anybody. But travellers and strangers may not fell trees to use them as foot-bridges over watercourses. The right to clear and cultivate forest-ground belongs to the village or the kanda. The work may be carried out collectively or individually.

It often happens that several persons pool their resources and make a joint purchase of slaves. When the latter have formed nzo of their own and multiplied they still belong to the kanda to which the purchasers belonged. The kanda therefore disposes over the slaves and their possessions. If the kanda is too small and there is no chief to support it, the children of the slaves may become members of the kanda and one of them, nzimbu, may be invested with a chief's dignity. Sometimes the slaves must be sold because the owner has contracted debts or is in other straits. Disobedient and defiant slaves are also sold off. The reason why the natives are so anxious to buy slaves is that the number of slaves a man possesses shows his wealth; they also constitute in a way a substitute for the sick and deceased, so that the available labour shall be adequate to current tasks.

A person may abandon his kanda and a slave his owner, provided that he goes and seeks protection with someone or offers himself as a slave to him, and the person in question accepts the offer. This procedure may take place in somewhat differing circumstances and may take different forms. One who deserts his chief or his kanda owing to harsh treatment or lack of concord, to seek protection with a well-known person or chief in another village, is called kwangi-protégé. On his arrival he grasps his prospective patron's or else his own loin-cloth and says: "Have pity on me, for those to whom I belong hate me. If you have no possessions with which to buy me free, then go and borrow." When this has been said, the future patron strikes the lappet of the loin-cloth with his hand, whereby on oath the promise to help the slave is confirmed. The protégé then has between twenty and thirty shots fired. Dance-drums are taken down so that the young men and women of the village may honour the kwangi-protégé with dancing. They sing: "The kwangi-protégés have not become so numerous to raise big hogs."

The following morning a message is sent to the man who owns the protégé. When the latter arrives he gets a pig, and when the pig has been slaughtered the owner keeps

one half and his kanda gets the other half. In this way both parties' share in the protégé is symbolized. When the pig has been eaten the protégé may be ransomed, and he remains thereafter with his patron. If the latter should in the sequel sell the protégé, the sales price is divided between the protector and his kanda.

The surrendering of a kunda-protégé follows approximately the same procedure; but in this case the wardship may also be sought if, for example, possessions for marriage or the like are not paid out. The suppliant in this case generally applies to a combative and deceitful person and says: "If you do not go and receive the possessions for me which So-and-so has, may you fall to the ground quite suddenly (nangu)." When the person addressed hears this, volleys are fired and there is dancing and hand-clapping. The following morning the suppliant comes and gives a pig and a goat to his protector to strengthen the kunda-friendship. When the animals have been handed over the protector and his protégé go to the person who owes the goods. What now ensues is a painful business for the latter, for if he has no kanda he may be rendered quite destitute. If the debt amounts, for instance, to five or six mbandu (50 to 60 francs), it may happen that besides the nzonzi's fee, which is between 100 and 150 bimbundi, he must pay 200 bimbundi extra.¹ A stubborn nzonzi, for the rest, may take a fee of 200 bimbundi as well as a pig for having "opened his mouth" (spoken) and a goat for the haggling. When the negotiations are concluded there remains to be paid one pig for the "burning of the seat". The protector and his protégé then share the goods between them.

If a woman seeks protection or friendship because she is at loggerheads with her husband or brother, she must receive a pig from her protector. She has the animal slaughtered and then sends a ham to her people, so that they may know that she has eaten of the pig. Hereafter, this woman has community with her protector. If a woman is not well cared for by her family when she falls ill or in connection with lawsuits and is annoyed on many counts, she becomes a mbwa kunda ya lusinguku (protégée who wants support). She then commends herself to a kanda that looks well after its own and says: "Now I have come to kukisingika (lean upon) you once and for all, for my kanda does not help me. They say that I am evil-smelling and sickly, that I am a spook and a drone. If you abandon me to them, may you

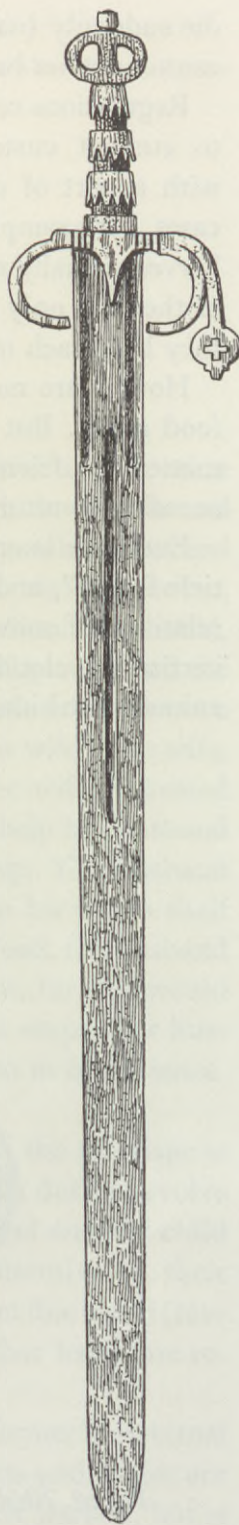


Fig. 27. Iron sword for a chief, Sundi in Mukimbungu (Laman 756).

¹ One kimbundi (plur. bimbundi) consists of 12 coloured handkerchiefs in one piece. Ten bimbundi are equal to one mbandu (one keg of gunpowder) or one goat or ten hens.

die suddenly (nakuu fwa kwaku)." In this case, too, a pig is slaughtered and her kanda cannot get her back.

Regulations concerning charges for rent and hiring out there are none; but according to current custom the owner of what has been loaned is generally recompensed with a part of what has been acquired through the use of his property. In certain cases, for example, one who by agreement grows crops on another's soil may share the harvest equally with the owner. If the harvest consists of peanuts, however, the owner of the field only gets a little basketful. If there is warm friendship between the parties, they help each other without recompense.

Houses are not let, for strangers and travellers are given both accommodation and food gratis. But it is then incumbent upon them to give a present instead. If it is a matter of a friend who has been on a visit, the hospitality is repaid when the host has occasion to return the visit.

Everyone is entitled to keep what he has found, for his "eye has given him the article found", and goods found are not returned without a reward except to friends and relatives. If someone finds a goat, a pig or some other domestic animal, he must advertise this aloud, but he afterwards gets his reward. If the finder knows who owns the animal, but hides it, and this subsequently becomes known, he is regarded as a thief.

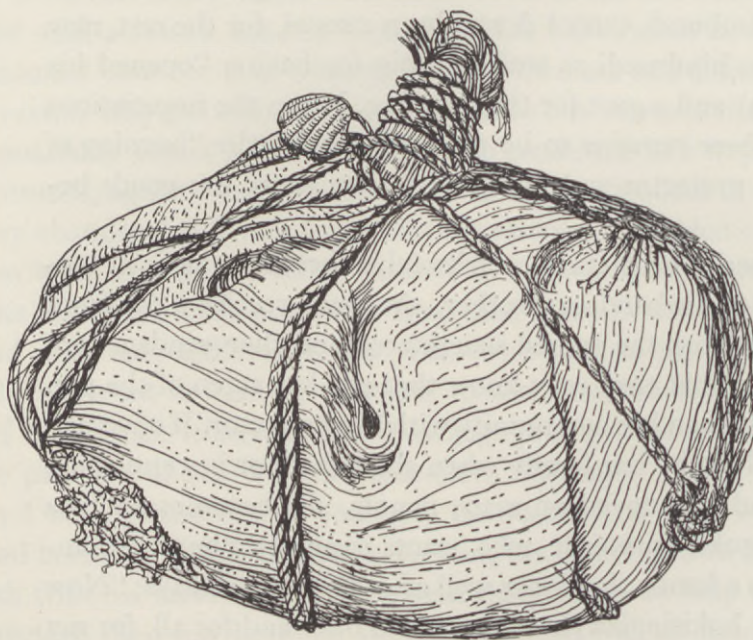


Fig. 28. Nkisi (the largest nkisi-bag in Laman's collection) Sundi in Mayombe (Laman 593).

CHAPTER VII

Civil Law

When a marriage has been contracted the two parties must be faithful to each other and respect each other's rights. The husband must procure loin-cloth, hoe, knife and divers provisions, such as salt, palm-nuts, bananas, pisang and, as far as possible, meat and fish as well as other necessities that his wife may need. Among these is also palm-wine, and if he does not tap this himself he should sometimes procure it elsewhere. He should, too, lend a hand with certain jobs, such as, for instance, the clearing of ground and the planting of bananas, and he must build a house, either for his wife alone or for the two of them. The husband cannot take back what he has once given to his wife. The wife, in her turn, must obey her husband and meet his just claims. If the wife is treated fairly in this way it is incumbent upon her to prepare the food and to help her husband to the best of her ability. Each party must respect the other's belongings. The husband may not, for example, get up and take manioc or other edibles from his wife's shelf without permission. If a friend or stranger comes on a visit and needs food, the husband must ask his wife if he may borrow it. Otherwise she will be indignant, for this would imply that he was taking back a present. Similarly, the wife may not empty her husband's nkutu-bag or take any of his belongings without his permission in his absence. Such an action would be regarded as theft.

In marital life the current customs and usages must be observed if the marriage is not to be desecrated and childless. When the first child is born certain duties devolve upon the husband. One of these is to see to it that his wife does not get another child before the first-born can walk. Newly married couples must be attentive to their parents-in-law and the brothers and sisters of the latter, and show them due *nsoni* (reverence) from the outset. Brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law, on the other hand, are regarded as brothers and sisters with whom one may joke and play.

Both the wife and the husband are in a subordinate position to the former's maternal uncle, for he is the wife's guardian and trustee, who sees that her rights and duties are fulfilled in the marriage. If the wife is guilty of any offence she is at first warned, but is thereafter punished in different ways. The same applies to the husband if he is deficient in his marital duties; his wife may finally be taken from him. Brutal husbands will therefore not venture to treat their wives just as they like. Nor is a marriage secure if

the husband has not concluded an agreement with this uncle or, if the latter is dead or there is other valid reason for not resorting to him, with the wife's brothers. Otherwise the husband risks having to pay high fines. After the contraction of the marriage the husband still belongs to his kanda, and he shares in the fortunes and interests of the latter. The wife, in her turn, still belongs to her kanda. Every kanda, however, wants to attain to the greatest influence and power, and the conflicts of interest arising from this circumstance may also spread to marriages. The individual members of a kanda must of course always and in all circumstances identify themselves with the interests of their kanda. And through the oldest members the chief of the kanda sees to it that what has been decided is also actually carried out. A member of the kanda who acts rashly and arbitrarily is punished if the interests of the kanda have been ignored. Private matters, on the other hand, are left to the individual to manage. No one can be excluded from his kanda, but a criminal member may be sold into slavery or in the worst case executed.

If an unmarried man has cleared ground and cultivated bananas etc., his brothers and sisters and other relatives may go and take a bunch of bananas, but they should then give him a present in return, or at least tell him what they have done. If the man marries, the right of using the crops passes to his nzo, and others may not trespass upon this.

As has already been mentioned, it is incumbent upon the owners of slaves to see to it that the latter marry and multiply. If the slave-owners are mild and good, no difference is apparent between the free-born and the slaves and their children.

Owing to the kivila, the children in a marriage belong to the mother's kanda. The father thus has no right to sell his children, as he does not own them. To this rule there is, however, an exception: if the mother is a slave, he owns the child (nzimbu-child), since she has been bought. If a maternal uncle gets into difficulties through a lawsuit or the like, he may take his niece and sell her or leave her as a pledge with some wealthy man. The right of ownership of children is often very complicated, on account of failure to pay the goods agreed upon for the wedding or at the matondo-feast in full. If a mother, for example, has broken up her marriage after having given birth to children, the husband keeps them until he has got back what he once paid for his wife, but only if this was formally agreed upon. If, on the other hand, he has contracted a longo-marriage without such an agreement, he may not keep the children.

In several tracts the father receives a part of the fees that are paid at his daughter's wedding. If the son goes out to work, he must buy fine presents for his father and hand them over when he comes home. The right to the children may, however, after purchase or on agreement, pass to the father. Thus a father who loves his child very much may sometimes buy it free with a payment of goods, provided its kanda agrees to this. The child then belongs to the father and is in the sequel regarded as a member of his kanda. If the mother dies, the children leave their father if he is not tender and loving. They then go to their kanda and seek out some woman with whom their mother has

had intercourse and who has her disposition. As a rule, the mother has already commended the children to her before her death if they are not grown up. The children do, however, nevertheless stand in a certain relation to the father and his *kanda*, since in the last analysis it is he who has begotten them.

From this derives the *kitaata* (father's right) as regards the children and the children's rights as regards him. This applies also for the grandchildren. Among the father's rights may be noted, *inter alia*, the following. If one of the children succeeds in shooting an animal, the father must have the *ntima* (a part of the entrails and the fat). If the child has begun to catch rats or other game, the father is to get the first catch. If a child weaves, it must give him pieces of cloth. If it taps palm-wine, the father is to be given a calabash of palm-wine occasionally. A daughter must sometimes take a part of her harvest and prepare a good meal to give her father. If the father has died, one of his brothers or sisters may take his place (*taata dya nkento*), for they are of course all one with the right father, and retain his rights. If, again, the child has died, it is incumbent upon the grandchildren to observe the father's rights.

This way of honouring and reverencing the father gives happiness and prosperity, for when the father has received a gift he expresses his thanks and gives a blessing; he also gives the marksman a little powder for this gun, the weaver one or two hens, and the daughter a little cloth and so forth. If, on the other hand, the children and the grandchildren neglect to give the father the gifts in question, he may pronounce a mild curse, which will, however, become stronger if the child persists in its disrespect, so that all its prosperity will come to naught. If the child is overtaken with such a punishment and feels remorse, it must reconcile itself with the father by giving him a present.

When the father dies, the children and grandchildren must contribute to the shrouding and the burial with big gifts. They are afterwards rewarded according to their gifts. If, for example, they have contributed ten blankets, they may receive a pig. If their gift has been five or six blankets, they get a goat; and if they have contributed only two or three they will get two or three hens. If they bury their father well, the children get a goat or a pig when the mortuary-hut has been torn down. Each one may also receive a blanket, a piece of cloth or the like, as *mavemba* (gift of blessing).

The claims on the father are about the same, for they are also entitled to the *ntima* of the animals that are killed, whereby, for the rest, they have good hunting luck. If the father denies his children any of their rights they cannot, certainly, curse him or bring him bad luck, they must adopt other measures. Thus if the surviving fathers (especially the paternal uncles) refuse to give the children any fish from a lake where they have formerly got fish the latter may go to the lake in question and complain: "Eh, say truly, has not father bequeathed this marsh? If father has done so, why can they not give me fish, when they have caught it?" The children then take clay from the lake and put it on the shore, after which the fathers are *bindamene* (closed) and do not get any fish until they have come to an agreement with the children and paid one or two hens to them, for the children's word is combined with the force and power of the deceased

fathers. The same applies if the children and grandchildren are refused, for example, permission to pluck palm-nuts or nsafu from their father's or grandfather's trees, or if they are punished after breaking any of his things. The deceased fathers then awake to life and upset the living through dreams because they have maltreated their children and grandchildren.

The relation between the father and his children and grandchildren is very comfortable and trustful. The latter may joke and say what they like, for instance: "Aw, how mean you are. You can't give away anything. If you prepare food you eat it up at the corner-post of the house" (which means that he is so niggardly that no one is given a taste). If the child (or grandchild) is small, the father (or grandfather) may in his turn bind it and threaten it: "Now I'm going to cut your head off", in order to make it cry, or he may roll it on the ground and press its nose into the earth, and say, finally: "Give me a hen or an egg, and I'll let you go." This is done only to frighten the children. The latter, however, may take whatever food they like from their father or his kanda; this does not matter. They may pluck fruit from his nsafu-trees or take his pineapples etc. without this being regarded as theft.

A man may not step over the legs of another man's wife, but if the children or grandchildren do this with a woman of their father's kanda this does not matter. Similarly, a child or grandchild may with impunity throw something in her face, and if coitus is had with the woman the culprit is let off with the placatory gift of a pig for having defiled the home. He need not, on the other hand, pay a fine for adultery, for in this case the deceased fathers would be wrathful, as it is undignified to take legal proceedings against them.

In the name-mottoes there is generally mention of the kanda in which the mother was born, where she came from (funu), instead of saying whose child or grandchild a person is, since the child is owned by the mother's kanda although the father is its begetter. Thus the child stems in its origin entirely from the father, not from the mother. But the kanda-connection is with the mother's kanda, not the father's. When a child has grown into manhood it therefore belongs to the mother's kanda, not to the father's. Not much is said about the mother's grandchildren, and when grandchildren are mentioned in accounts of traditions etc. the reference is to the grandchildren of the man. Nor does one speak of the mother's rights with regard to the children in contradistinction to the father's rights; and the mother does not call down curses on the heads of her children and grandchildren, for they are her own property.

All quarrels and lawsuits arising in connection with the children's property are investigated and settled by zinzonzi called in by both parties. If either of the parties refuses to acquiesce in the judgment pronounced, an armed conflict ensues, which as a rule is terminated when one or a couple of warriors have been shot. The losing party must then pay considerably greater damages. The zinzonzi are often experienced men or chiefs enjoying great and general respect among the people.

In cases of death many laws must be observed on account of the economic engage-

ments that have been entered upon by different makanda, e.g. through marriage. If a paramount chief, e.g. Navunda, has died the following points, amongst others, must be observed. No hoes, knives or other edged tools may be touched before the banganga have come and besprinkled them. Anyone using them before this will be smitten with sores by the deceased. No one may crack or eat palm-nuts before the village has been besprinkled. If this prohibition is contravened it will be overtaken with misfortune and death, for cracking peanuts is tantamount to sending for the dead. Nor may the children be carried in nzemba-bands before the village has been besprinkled, for otherwise many children would die.

No one should work with the soil on nkenge and nsona days, for these are sacred to the chief. Anyone who does work, however, must leave his hoe in the field when he rests in the shade of some tree, for otherwise the dead will take the hoe and the naked children will see the departed. The manioc must be pulled up with the hands, for anyone who uses a hoe will see the dead. He has not shown reverence for the deceased, and therefore the village will be exposed to pamu (panic).

No one may eat kilembe-stew, for then the rain will be "shut off". All banganga who together with the chief have made a nkisi twist their little finger over the ringfinger and say: "We hear. We do not see." Thus when Navunda sees this he cannot take his fellow-banganga with him to the realm of the dead. Some banganga may not blow a mbambi-pipe either. At the death the bamaduka (assistant banganga) must besprinkle the chief's village and all the villages that were under his jurisdiction. They must also close all the approaches thither.

Among other customs that were formerly observed when a paramount chief had died may be noted that wherever a mbyazi's funeral procession had passed, the people were entitled, if they had the chance, to rape women and take manzu (plunder). The women were therefore on their guard, and children and animals were hidden away. If a boy was seized he might be sold.

Other customs became law in the tracts where they are applied. Thus if a wife, for example, dies, her brother has to report this to the husband with the phrase "the impairment of appetite", and the messenger also takes a hen and palm-wine with him. "The taking away of the door" (i.e. of the corpse) is paid with a goat, "the washing of the hands" with from three to five hens and the transportation of the corpse to the grave with a pig. These fees are paid to the husband by the one who has married off



Fig. 29. Nkisi-staff for the Nakongo (*nkisi nsi a Nakongo* or *Kumbi kia Nakongo*), Sundi in Mukimbungu (Laman 673).

the wife, and only after their payment can she be buried. If the guardian does not comply with the requirements of tradition there is a lawsuit, as a result of which the kanda of the deceased will be sentenced to sit and weep for two or three weeks before they "may get up". When this time is up the two makanda meet to drink palm-wine and to distribute presents to those who have shrouded the corpse. On taking leave they admonish one another: "Let us now part in daylight. You women may weep at the handles of your hoes. We men shall weep at our guns, for death is old and no stranger to us." Then the mourners get up, their hair is shaved off, they bathe and cleanse themselves. On a later occasion the lawsuit begins to the effect that the guardian must give back the goods that the husband has paid over on contraction of the longo-marriage or give him another wife instead. The latter alternative is called nsamba (substitute wife).

The children are not the heirs of their father, whose estate goes to his kanda, but only of the mother. But their inheritance goes also to the mother's kanda, to which they go after their mother's death, unless the sons wish to remain with their father during his lifetime. If the children are very small, the members of the mother's kanda who look after them get a part of the inheritance. If there are no children the mother's heir will be her eldest brother or the person who owns her. Everyone "in his house-door" (nzo) is the heir of his own people within the nzo, for the kanda may sometimes be divided up into several nzo.

The father may, however, have left some pig to be reared by a son, or a hen to a daughter, so that they get a certain payment hereby. Otherwise they get nothing but a piece of his winding sheet as a souvenir and for a blessing. Through a stipulation (kandu-prohibition), however, a father may decide how his possessions are to be distributed or managed. As a rule, such a kandu-stipulation is made if in the course of his last illness or otherwise he finds that any of his relatives have failed to visit him or show him friendship. He may then designate some other person as his heir, and the latter is then called to the sick bed and is instructed to have the sick man buried, after which he may inherit all his estate and deal with it according to his discretion. Others may be informed what they are to do with e.g. the sick man's animals, gunpowder and widows and so forth.

If the sick man knows that his kanda is small and poor, he may through a kandu-stipulation leave it in someone's care and give instructions accordingly. In the same way he gives instructions concerning his burial etc. A kandu-stipulation is made inviolate with an assurance on oath, which implies that things will go badly for anyone who does not fulfil his wishes. When the sick man has given his oath he draws on the ground with his finger or moves his buttocks towards the ground and adds: "If you do not do this you will rue it" or: "If you do not do this I shall soon come and fetch you." What the dying man says must be fulfilled, and his instructions are therefore obeyed to the last detail. One who failed to obey his behests would be persecuted in his dreams by the deceased.

In certain cases one may get permission to annul a kandu-stipulation, but this will

coast at least a pig. If the person who has laid down a kandu-stipulation has died and the party concerned wishes to annul this, he goes to a ngudi a nsimba (twin-father) to question him. He goes with the twin-father to the forking of the ways to the village, makes a fire and puts on a pot. He then relates the whole kandu-condition to the ngudi a nsimba. When the latter has heard all he says: "I am ngudi a bakisi (bakisi's chief). What the dead man has said has no longer any significance." The pot is then allowed to boil until it has boiled over into the fire, and therewith the kandu has disappeared. Another way of ensuring compliance with one's kandu is with oaths and invocation to nkisi Nkondi to punish the one who does not comply.

The person who "owns the deceased" is his heir; but if it is a rich and respected man who has many wives or a chief who has died, the heir is entitled to trade with the estate. He may not, however, keep everything for himself, but must pay out from it the recompense to those who have come with gifts for the shrouding and the burial. The recompense will vary according to the size of the gift. Of the widows he inherits he may keep two or more, the rest go to the nephews. The animals that are left over he may distribute according to his own discretion.

A child that has come and bewailed its father and given a good gift for the shrouding and in other respects helped the father during his illness will be well remembered. He will get, as tradition has it, "a mug and a dish". If the wife has bewailed her husband and been very useful to him and a great source of gladness, she will receive cloth and a gift of meat or an animal as thanks. If a rich and respected woman has died and other women have mourned her and given gifts, they are often left a good share of her belongings. The kanda inherits as a rule from its heads, such as ngwa nkazi (uncle) or mwana nkazi (nephew).

A mfumu (free-born man) may inherit his elder brother's possessions and widows. Mwana or baana ba mbuta (children born in the father's kanda), have not this right of inheritance, for they are men of their father's kanda and are his heirs. But they have power and rights as long as their father lives. When he dies they go to their kanda and there become swineherds to their elder brothers. But baana ba mbuta will from their father's kanda receive mavemba (pieces of the shroud) as a relic. Mwana kanda (one who is born in a kanda) cannot inherit the widows in the same, but inherits instead in the kanda from which his ngudi comes.

A free-born person and the child of the father's kanda have equal rights in several respects, such as e.g. the right to rule over slaves. But there is a difference in their respective powers, inasmuch as mfumu can give blessing or happiness to the children, but the children cannot give these

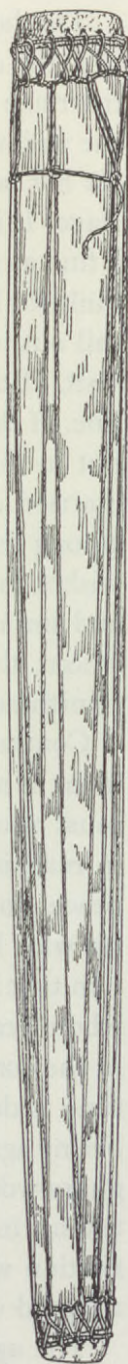


Fig. 30. Drum (*nlambula*), Sundi in Nganda (*Laman 210*).

to the father. When a chief dies his baleeke (younger brothers) become his heirs. They may divide up the inheritance if they do not trust anyone to manage it. Frequently, however, one is considered so clever and industrious that he is allowed to hold the inheritance. If a nleeke dies, the brother or the sister will inherit his estate, and the children may get a piece of cloth, a knife or a nkutu-bag or something of the sort as a souvenir. If a man has no baleeke but has slaves, the latter will be their master's heirs. As a rule the slaves inherit from one another in the same way as others.

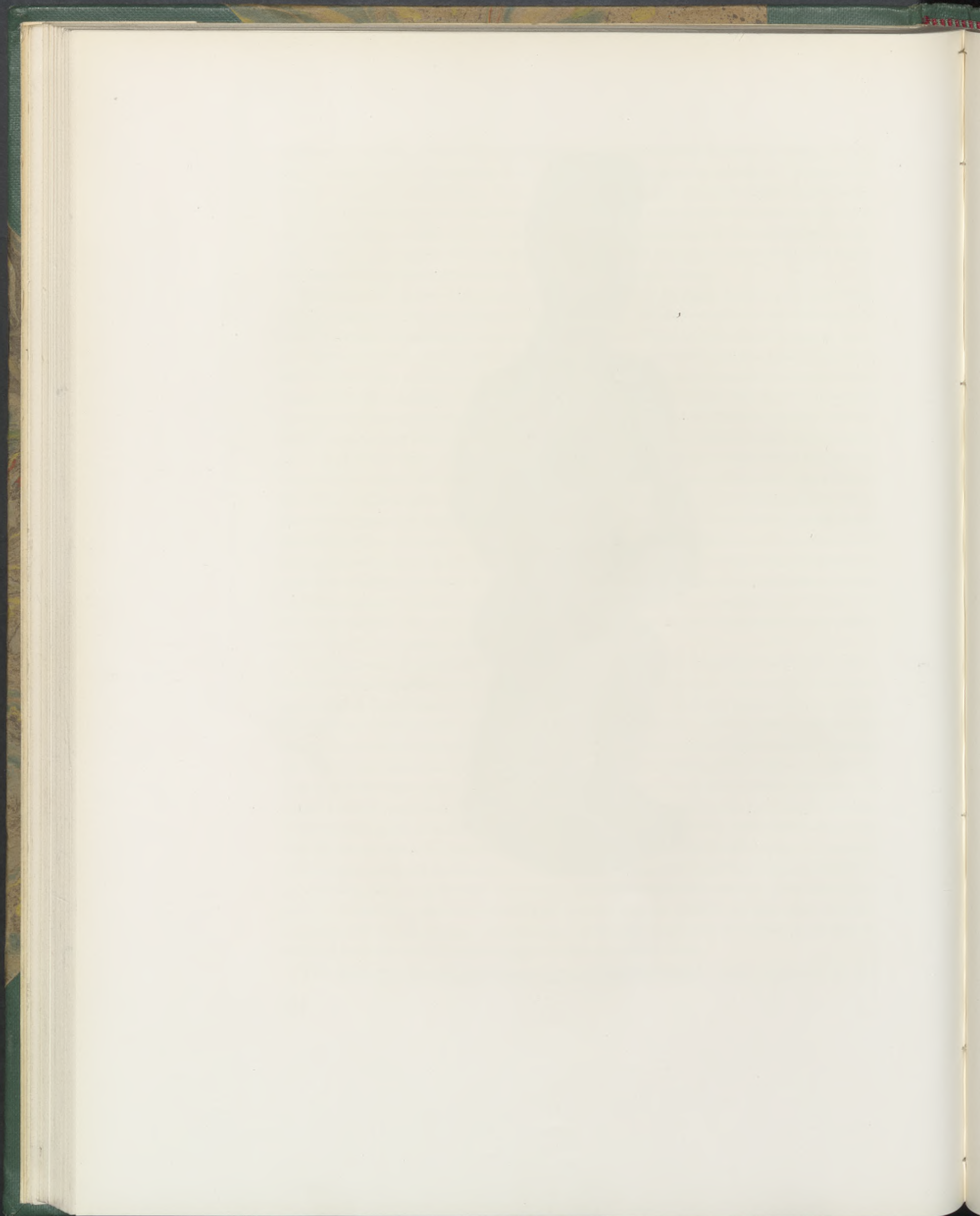
The heirs of widows will be the husband's elder or younger brothers on condition that the deceased has contracted a longo-marriage, for then it will remain his kanda's marriage until the possessions have been paid back. If none of the heirs wants to have the widow, they take her to her brothers. She remains a widow until the goods paid over for her have been paid back; not until this has been done may she contract a new marriage. If in the meantime anyone should have sexual intercourse with her he must pay a fine as for the committing of adultery. If no one inherits the widow a house may be built for her in her late husband's village. If any young man wants to visit her he must call out to her so that it may be known who the visitor is, as he must pay a fee for the visit. If the widow has been married off by agreement he must otherwise pay a heavy fine. If the widow does not wish to remain in the village she may go home to her own, but in this case the goods paid for her must be returned. If the widow has not been married off by agreement she is not inherited. In the distribution of an inheritance among the relatives who are the rightful heirs quarrels may sometimes arise if someone wishes to transfer his share to another, or himself wishes to keep the inheritance to use and improve it. Unwise relations and persons who infringe regulations in force, for whom, therefore, the head of the kanda must pay fines or upon whom he must inflict punishment, are seldom given rights over property.

Contracts and agreements with witnesses and signs are very common with the settlement of more important deals. If, for example, a human being is to be bought, an agent must always be present as an intermediary. If the buyer and the seller have difficulty in reaching an agreement, they are admonished as follows: "Buy in peace, abstain in peace, do not defile Nkondi", in order that they may part, each taking his own and going his way. If, on the other hand, the business is concluded, this is done with the reservation that if the slave is not healthy or quite satisfactory for a period of some months or a whole year the deal shall be cancelled. As the natives cannot write, they make notches in the corner-posts of a house, in poles or the like, or tie knots in cords to see when the time is due to make or receive payments. There are also many other ways of remembering agreements, as for example by keeping a portion of the purchased goods, whether gunpowder, salt, palm-nuts or animals (in the last-mentioned case the tip of the tail is taken), in case the purchase should give rise to dispute. Marks are also made in connection with the purchase of fruit-trees, woods and land, and the same procedure is adopted with all sorts of other bigger or less important deals.

The agent gets his fee for the deal, but is then responsible for the payment of any



Plate 2. Grave-sculpture (Kinionga ye mwana), Sundi in Vungu (Laman 730).



part of the purchase-price that may still remain to be paid, and he is likewise responsible for the annulment of the purchase. This implies that the payment made is to be returned or that another slave or animal etc. is to be given instead of that sold. He often gets a big fee, for example two or three pigs and other goods. If there should nevertheless later be dissension in connection with the purchase, the suit must be decided by the zinzonzi and the bau or mbundu ordeals.

For agreements between villages concerning marriage, hunting, help and support in case of war etc., the chiefs from both sides convene. They confirm the agreement on oath and with invocations of nkisi Nkondi, confirming the latter by driving iron wedges and the like into him. Those infringing an agreement must pay a certain sum in fines. Temo is an association or a company in which each interested party contributes his part of the amount that is to be used for purchase, commerce or work (fig 21: a, 22).

Various kinds of loan are of general occurrence. "This has been left us by the ancestors", says the tradition. One who has got into debt in one way or another takes a loan. The prospective borrower first takes palm-wine with him and asks if he may borrow. On a day agreed upon he comes again, bringing witnesses, and the lender also has his witnesses. The borrower serves palm-wine and asks: "Have you five pigs to lend me?" The lender goes aside with his witnesses and decides to grant the credit. His representatives receives the loan and hands it over to the other's representatives, who in their turn hand it over to the borrower. When the transaction is settled, the borrower must come back with two hens or more, according to the custom, one for the enquiry about the loan and one for the loan itself.

Formerly, when cloth and other such goods were precious, it was a very profitable business to grant loans. One who has lent two or three pieces of cloth takes no interest if they are soon paid back. In former times, the lender was paid for having "unloosed the hide" (in which the cloths were wrapped) and let the cloths see the sun. For five cloths one was exacted as interest when they were paid back, for twenty a human being was required, who then worked for the lender. When the pledge was returned the interest was ten cloths, for ten borrowed it was five, and so on.

In connection with smaller loans the borrower must help the lender until he has discharged his debt. The borrower may also pledge himself, and take his house with him to the lender's village for the period during which he is paying off the loan. He may, however, also pledge one of his people to work there during the time the loan is being repaid. When the loan and the interest are paid back, though, he may not count the work performed by the pledged person. A proverb says: "The way of the borrower is heavy when he is to pay off the loan. But he must not refuse, for who refused when he was permitted to borrow?" No one, therefore, must refuse to meet his obligation. One who goes to claim his due also takes palm-wine with him, with which he treats the borrower. The latter then returns the compliment with a calabash of palm-wine and perhaps from two to five hens or a pig. This return gift may not be deducted from the debt, but is rather to be regarded as interest for a postponement. For everything that is given

marks are made in case either of the parties or both should die, for the debt does not die.

When the debt is paid off witnesses and representatives are summoned, the marks for the payment of interest and instalments are shown and counted. Besides the loan itself the borrower must often pay very high interest; instead of one pig, for instance, he may have to pay three, four or five. Such usury, however, is remembered, so if that kanda needs to borrow itself it will have to pay the same or a still higher interest. One consequence of this is that the two parties agree not to maintain this custom, but to content themselves with low interest. When anyone refuses to pay his debt it sometime happens that dissension breaks out between some villages, and this may even lead to armed conflict. Each party may then pledge one or several persons, who will become the property of the party that wins a suit. The same procedure is adopted also in connection with other quarrels which cannot be compounded amicably.

If the witnesses and mediators of the two parties cannot come to an agreement, both parties meet on a big hill-top and continue deliberations. Each side pledges ten persons. Each party has a big open space cleared on the hill, where dancing goes on to the music of the drums. When the zinzonzi come on the scene with their brooms in their hands the dancing stops, for they must be listened to when they turn, stamp with their feet and put and answer questions. Perhaps one may say: "On the day I die I shall go to heaven." Those on the other side sing: "Eh, you MALEBA, come, oh come!" And then the women must rub him (the nzonzi) back and head. Some stretch up their arms above the head, and if the nzonzi has rings on his arms he rattles them nakwa-kwa-kwa, and cries: "Hold fast, hear ho-ho-ho". When the nzonzi dances all those present must also dance.

The zinzonzi have had small huts erected for themselves on the hill, and food is brought to them every day as long as the deliberations are going on. Sometimes a number of them go on one side to take counsel; those who dance keep on with this both day and night. They may be assembled on the hill for many days, indeed, even a whole month. The zinzonzi gradually become more and more excited, they become sweaty, get red eyes and begin to rush about and jump wildly. After some time they demand their pigs to "soften up the bottom" of the provision-bag, and each one then gets two. After this the deliberations are started again, and when they are finished zinzonzi from other quarters come to listen. They go first to the one side and put their questions, and the zinzonzi of this side answer them, tying knots in a string in order to remember them. They then go to the other party to hear their view. Before the zinzonzi of the respective parties return to the council square to give judgement they take away the persons given as pledges so that no one may take them back, for they will belong to the winning party. Before going aside to take counsel they are given some more pigs, and together with the elders they eat.

The zinzonzi of the respective parties now separate again, the one group going away to one hill and the other to another. Then the zinzonzi and the elders who have

taken part in the investigation decide the case. When they have ascertained who has lost, he is summoned and asked, for instance: "Why did you go and take the property in the village with force?" He: "It was for this which he owed me that I took the goods with force."—"Yes, this was right." And they go on putting questions. Finally he is asked: "But for what cause did you commit this act?" And when the man answers: "For this I have no cause" he has lost. The zinzonzi then send a messenger to the one adjudged to have won the suit and say: "Fire your salvoes, you have won!" There is much shooting and loud cries (wulu-wulu). The men and women in his kanda are joyful, they were afraid of losing their pledges, but now they have won.

The loser is in despair, for he cannot recover the people he has pledged. When the elders come and mark the winner with chalk he must give them a slave and a pig, sometimes even six pigs. Occasionally, if the zinzonzi are stubborn and want big gifts, they get two slaves and a pack of cloth, and not until these have been handed over does the winner get back his human pledges. The one who has lost the suit must also pay the zinzonzi, and to the pledges already given must be added another person if the loser cannot redeem him with gods. Those who have been slain in the war must also be replaced. The winning party may deal as they think fit with the human pledges; thus they may keep them or sell them. When the suit is concluded everyone goes home and they all once more live in peace with one another.

If the borrower cannot offer any person as a pledge he may nevertheless give security through a guarantor. The latter is as a rule a chief or some rich person, and it may happen that the latter must pay his debt; but he may reclaim this with interest from the borrower. To act as guarantor is called either to bunda ntulu (strike one's breast) or to nika mvindu (scrape the dirt off one's arm), in both cases a sign to the witnesses present that one is prepared to act as guarantor. The borrower gives an assurance that he will repay the loan, and if he fails to do so the lender may come and bind him. The latter may also say: "Make an agreement with this chief in the matter." They then give a gun to the borrower, who says: "If I do not give them back, then kill men and women"! He then cocks the gun and gives it to the one to whom he has addressed these words. Any dispute as to the repayment is decided by the guarantor. When the debt is paid they give a pig.

If the borrower should die, the guarantor will become responsible for the loan. He gets one of the borrower's kanda to come and work off the loan as a tapper of palm-wine or the like. When smaller sums have been lent it often happens that the borrower only gives a hen as payment for a postponement when he is dunned for the debt. The creditor goes to a village accompanied by strong men, and there he binds a person and takes him home with him. The villagers immediately come and enquire after the cause. As soon as they have heard this they accompany the creditor to the debtor and demand the payment. The latter must then not only pay his debt and the interest on this, but the bound person and his fellow-villagers must also have some recompense. The same procedure may also be adopted to get other rights.

If the debtor has no goods with which to pay immediately, his kanda will step into the breach and help, unless he is a hopeless scoundrel or has a very bad reputation. In this case they leave him to the mercy of the creditor. Otherwise his nearest relatives will share the responsibility for the debt and must help to pay this. Sometimes articles are hired out, as for example guns, and a part of the bag is then used as payment. Men may also sometimes be hired for certain jobs, or may accompany caravans to the coast or elsewhere as bearers. Formerly, however, much work, as for instance sowing and harvesting, was done through mutual help.

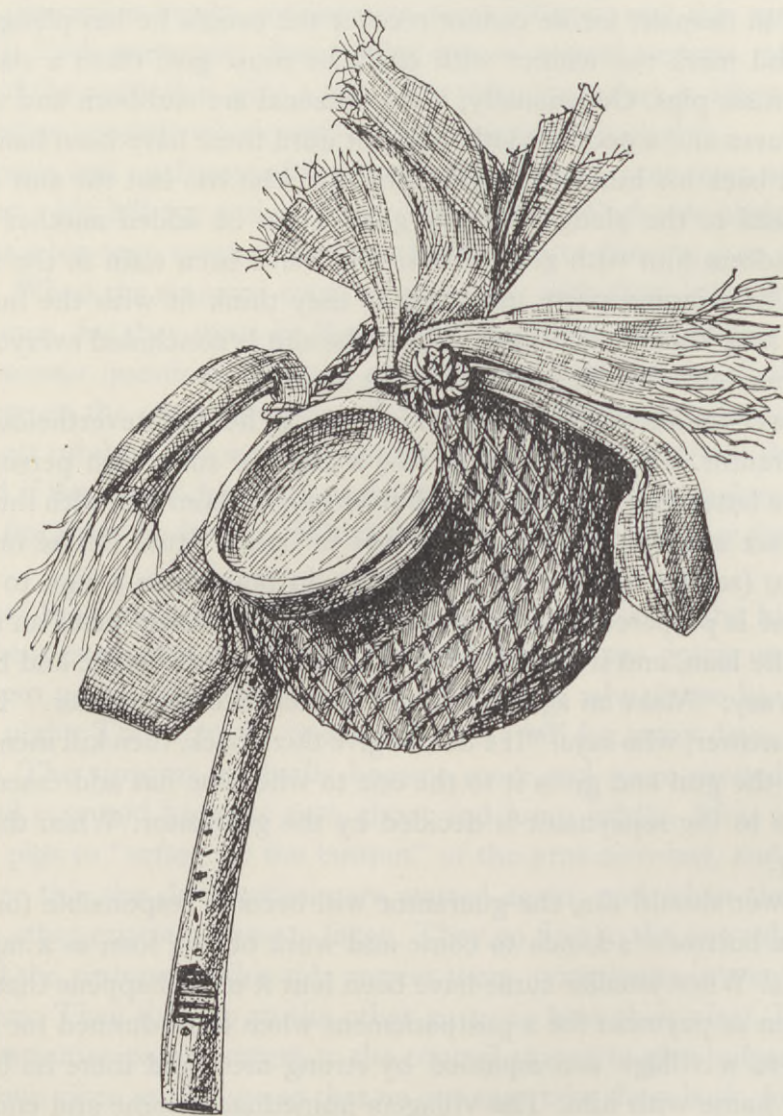


Fig. 31. Nkisi Mbundu, Sudi in Kingoyi (Laman 553).

CHAPTER VIII

The Penal Code

The natives have no definite norm according to which different crimes are punished; but they try to follow the traditions in accordance with which earlier cases have been decided. In certain cases the same crime may be punished differently in different parts of the country, according to the chief's public proclamations. A number of laws cover the whole district of the paramount chief; others, again, apply only in smaller areas such as villages. Whenever a law is proclaimed, the elders and all sub-chiefs assemble for deliberations in the town of the paramount chief. If it is a matter of proclaiming a market law, on the other hand, the meeting is held either in the house of the market-chief or at the market-place. In the villages, the regulations to be confirmed by law are decided by the village chief together with the elders and the people in the village square.

Laws referring to adultery, murder and assault etc. are likewise framed by the village chiefs who have joined forces to form a province; but sometimes each village or kanda frames its own laws. These then apply chiefly for the kanda in question, and only the paramount chiefs have any authority over other makanda. Whenever such important laws are made they are confirmed by both parties knocking a lubau (iron wedge) into nkisi Nkondi, at the same time engaging on oath to keep the agreement. Such decrees are respected and kept as long as possible. If they are contravened, the culprit is punished and the agreement confirmed in the same way as before. The chief of the village or the kanda lays down the laws for the bringing up of the children and for peaceful intercourse in the village and so forth. He sees to it that law and order are duly observed. Anyone who has a grievance may go to the chief, who will go into the matter and conduct the legal procedure. Every member of the village or of a kanda has the right to frame a number of laws for his home and his property, and this is often done before some nkisi, to ensure that his words shall be respected.

All laws of major importance are often repeatedly proclaimed publicly at big lawsuits, at markets and in the villages, so that they may be remembered from generation to generation. Since certain chiefs are not upright, many deceitful acts occur when big lawsuits are to be decided. There thus remains the last court of appeal: armed conflict. Owing to suspicion of kindoki and the like, many must suffer undeservedly, in spite of

the law. Thus in many cases the sentence is passed and the punishment inflicted because power and wealth are behind one of the parties. Social interests etc. are not decisive.

The punishments inflicted vary greatly; they may even, as has already been mentioned, vary for one and the same crime in different districts. The principle is in force that the man is considered guilty who has been the cause of a crime, even if it is not he himself who has performed it. Thus in every criminal investigation the aim is to ascertain who has been the cause of the crime. The culprit may be punished by being put in the stocks, the pillory, rattan fetters or a pit, by being executed in one way or the other, by being cursed or by being commended to the spiritual powers. The latter then afflict the criminal with sickness, all sorts of misfortunes or even death. Forced labour and such like European methods of punishment, on the other hand, are unknown. It is commonest, however, for the criminal to expiate his offence by paying a fine. Some examples of crime and punishment may be adduced.

One who sits in the market-place and eats while trade is going forward, who digs a pit there or pulls up kimbanzya-herbs may be punished by being buried alive. One who has murdered another must be executed, unless he has been commissioned to do the deed by another, in which case the punishment is meted out to the latter. He may possibly ransom himself by giving a slave and a lot of goods in his own stead. If a hen runs over the leopard-skin on which the market-chief is sitting, the owner of the bird must forfeit one or two slaves and pay the court costs. One who kills a cat must pay 200 to 300 pieces of cloth. One who kills a hound must pay a fine every hunting season, for a lawsuit over a dog "never dies", i.e. is never finished. One who injures another with a knife must "cover the wound" with a pig. If the wound inflicted is considerable, however, legal proceedings may be instituted and the fine may then amount to two pigs. If a child injures a playmate, the mother's kanda, which owns the child, must pay, and not the person who begot it, i.e. the father.

Theft is judged differently. One who steals a hen may perhaps have to pay ten. If someone steals in another's field the offence may be punished; but not infrequently the villagers, or the people in the neighbouring villages, if the offence has been committed there, agree in certain circumstances not to take any proceedings in the matter. If, however, a person steals in his mother's field, his head is shaved, gunpowder is placed on his crown and is then ignited before others to the accompaniment of loud cries, so that the thief may feel ashamed.

If a woman is found in another's manioc-field her hoe may be taken from her as a proof of the accusation against her. But if the man who catches her thus red-handed is a loose character he may give her back her hoe on condition that he is permitted to visit her when a suitable opportunity presents itself. Children who steal from their mother are beaten; frequently they may get pepper rubbed in their eyes and anuses. They may, however, be put up on a shelf in the house and smoked. The same punishment is meted out if they indulge in fornication. Thievish persons were formerly often

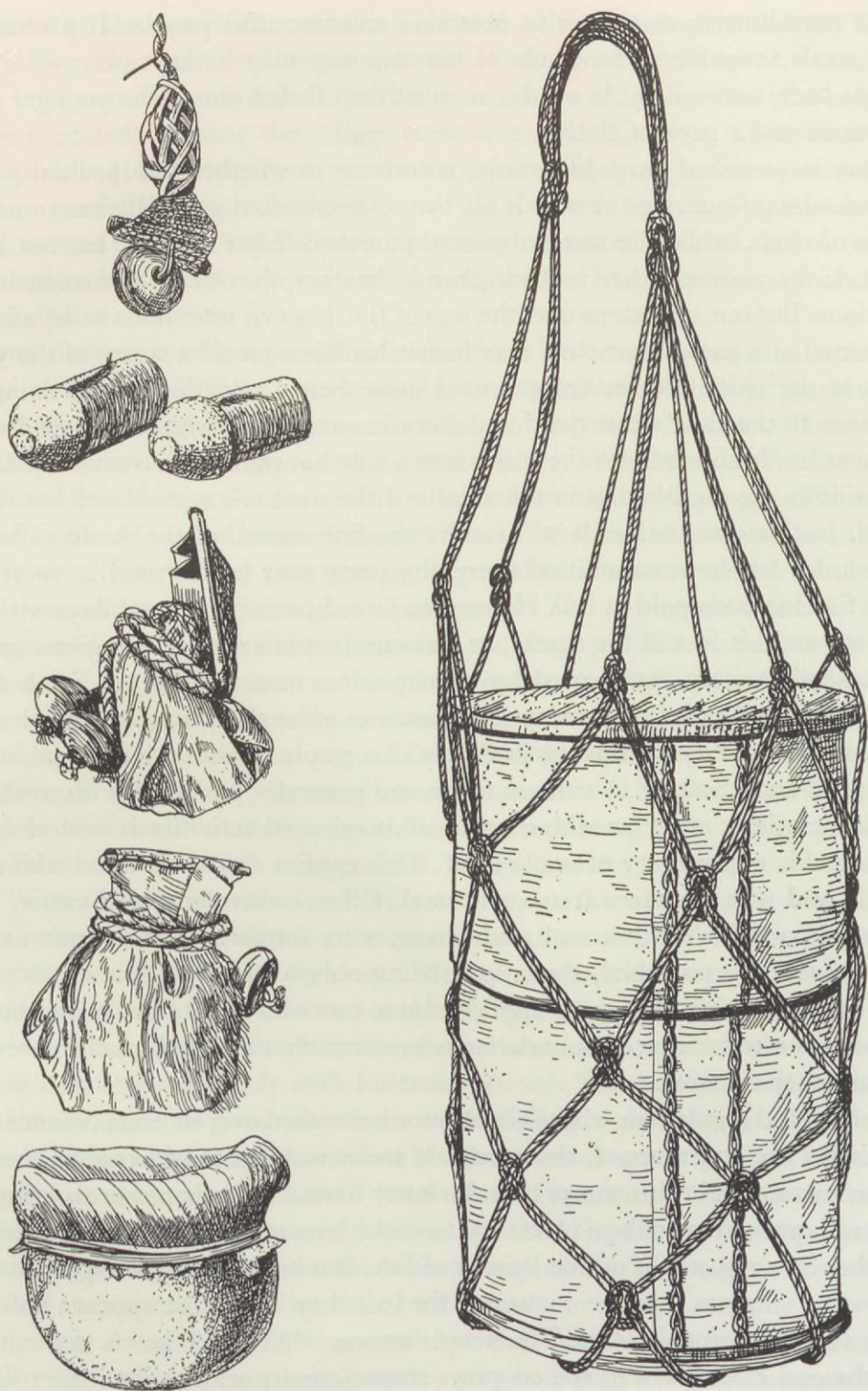


Fig. 32. Nkisi Lemba: a, the contents; b, the box, Sudi in Mukimbungu (Laman 583).

sold as a punishment, as were also obstinate and deceitful people. If a stranger or traveller steals something, the whole of his company may be kept prisoner until the matter has been unravelled. As a rule, he must then forfeit one of the younger persons in his retinue and a pack of cloth.

Adultery is punished very differently, according to whether the insulted party has contracted a longo-marriage or not. If so, the co-respondent generally has to pay 20 to 30 pieces of cloth, while the woman goes unpunished if her conduct has not been all too loose. If the co-respondent is the husband's brother, the offence is not considered to be so serious. But one who steps over the legs of (i.e. has evil intentions with) a favourite wife (nkama) of a paramount chief may forfeit his life even if he is one of the younger brothers of the chief. Others are executed immediately and their heads hung up at the entrance to the chief's courtyard. Adultery in connection with marriages for which no payment has been made for the bride is as a rule not punished so severely. Offences against widows are punished as in other cases if the woman's widowhood has not been cancelled. In this case the kanda will receive the fine instead of the deceased husband.

If a murder has been committed the guilty party may be tortured in several ways until the fine has been paid in full. He may be forced to sit for several days with a yoke on his neck and his feet in the stocks, or be bound with a rope. He is given urine and bilela (washed sanitary cloths used by women when menstruating) to drink and eat, and his mouth is dried with excrement. If anyone gives the prisoner water instead of urine when he is thirsty he must immediately change places with the criminal.

Lies, theft and cheating in various forms are generally punished with a whipping, the stocks or pillory etc. One who continues his criminal activities is sold or executed when a suitable opportunity presents itself. This applies also to children who are thin and sickly and who therefore frequently steal. Offences involving real estate, such as the felling of another's palms and nsafu-trees, were formerly looked upon as serious crimes and severely punished, the culprit being obliged to pay a fine of 30 pieces of cloth or a human being. The same applied also to one who felled trees in another man's wood to cross a watercourse. Boundaries were formerly respected much more scrupulously than they are now.

If the laws and regulations whose observance is watched over by nkisi Nkondi or some other minkisi are contravened, the criminals are considered to be exposing themselves to the sicknesses and misfortunes that the latter have it in their power to bring about.

It often happens that village chiefs try to make laws whose contravention will leave them richer by a pig, a goat or hen by way of fine. But before the new regulation can be made law the villagers must be convened, for it is they who must approve the change, and they often refuse to do this. The people answer: "No, such law is not suitable. It will be the end of concord in the country, arouse enmity and lead to bitter fights, so that we shall be murdering one another. No, O chief, we will not (give our consent)." The chief then lets the matter drop. If it is a good law the people say: "Yes, O chief, this is good", and herewith the law and the fines for its infringement are established.

Frequently, the nature of a crime is indicated by mentioning the fine for its contravention. Thus the natives will speak of a pig-crime, a goat or hen crime, a man-crime (a human being must in this case be paid as a forfeit) or a death-crime (the culprit must then be executed). Among the crimes most severely judged are those referred to the use of *kindoki* (black magic) or which are directed against paramount chiefs. These are always punishable with death, and as a rule also with torture. The criminal may be hanged, stoned to death, exposed to wild beasts, besmeared with oil etc., so that he will be eaten alive by flies or migratory ants, flung into a river with stones round his neck or burned alive.

Among the serious crimes punishable with death are crimes committed in the market-place or on the way thither. The criminal is then punished by being "planted", i.e. he is buried alive and has a stake driven through his body into the earth. Those who own the criminal must dig the grave in the market-place. When the day for the burial has come Lulendo's chief sends for all the village-chiefs and their people. The man to be executed is placed on the brink of the pit. Tinder is stuffed in his ears, so that he shall not hear what is said. They then give him a pot of *yuuma* and meat, so that he may eat to repletion, after which he is given palm-wine. The *bamayaala* (officials of power) now begin to dance like the *zinzonzi* in a suit, and sing e.g.: "The wretch, bring him here, burn yourself up. Eh, the wretch, bring him here and so forth." Or: "Who is the chief in the village? Are you then the successor in the *mbanza* (town)?" Or: "The trap on the road, ah, you yourself have set it." Or: "Shall you conduct a lawsuit? Shall you go to the Congo?" Or: "Pull yourself! *Nzambi* has wished it." After dancing and singing Lulendo's chief reads out the law again. Between each paragraph the *bamayaala* sing and dance. But the people must remain silent. At the last, the paramount chief dances and sings: "Who owns the country?" — "It is yours." After this he makes small incisions in the criminal's body and immediately runs quickly home to the village without looking round.

The *bamayaala* stay where they are. They cause the criminal to be lowered into the pit, drive a stake through his head and body and scoop earth into the grave. If the guilty man is free-born and not a slave, Lulendo's chief may not make incisions in his skin, but only strike his body with Lulendo's sword. This and the incisions in the skin show that the chief has given his consent to the killing of the criminal. When a Lulendo chief has performed such an execution he takes a new name, e.g. *NANTENTILA* (uneasy as to what shall come), *NANSANGU* (renowned), *NANKAMBAKANI* (who interns, intervenes). The *bamayaala* also take new names, such as *NANKONDO* (commandment, law), *NAMAYAALA* (co-regent), *NAMBEELE* (sword) and so on. When they enter upon their office they may not be called by their birth-name.

The people thought that their ancestors in the realm of the dead would understand that one who had been executed in such a way had been a wretch because he had arrived there with a whole *nsala* (soul). This implied that he had not died of illness, for then the *nsala* declines like the moon when it is waning. Such a death would also serve as a deterrent and a warning to others.

If anyone, whether free-born or slave, has a matter that is to be tried before a court, he has the right to apply to a *nzonzi* who shall help him. As many suits are rather insignificant, the procedure is often fairly simple and short. The matter may even be settled between the parties without any court procedure at all if the guilty party is willing to pay the fine required by his opponent. It is part of the legal practice of the Sundi that every quarrel or dissension within or outside of the *kanda*, however insignificant it may be, must be settled, for otherwise nothing is forgiven. But as soon as the matter has been settled it must also be forgotten, and true peace must obtain between the parties.

When a big lawsuit is on the plaintiffs try with old *zinzonzi* to resuscitate suits that have already been settled, in order to be able to inflate the damages they are claiming to a tremendous sum. The defendant will try, however, to protect himself against such procedure by calling witnesses and adducing all kinds of commemorative objects such as e.g. cloths and pigs' tails from the cases in question; for he must always be able to answer all questions in the suits the plaintiffs may bring up. The latter have in the course of the years been telling the successive generations not only of the traditions of the *kanda*, but also of all the more important lawsuits in which it has been involved and how these have been settled, and of the suits that their fathers have "left behind"; for it sometimes happens that certain chiefs postpone the final settlement of a case in the hope of getting so much the more.

Every case is decided through questions and answer. The party that is unable to answer the questions satisfactorily loses the case. After this the *ka nenga* (parties) retire for separate deliberations, the one to come to an agreement as to what fine they shall demand, and the other to say what they are willing to give. If, despite several debates, the parties are unable to arrive at an agreement, the final settlement is postponed. They may, however, also seek counsel with a paramount chief, or the case may lead to an armed conflict. Simpler suits that do not require so much unravelling are settled out of hand by the paramount chief and the elders or the *mayala* (minor chiefs).

If anyone has been murdered, the nearest relatives of the victim go immediately to the paramount chief and urge him to mete out heavy punishment to the guilty party. When the chief has received the hens and the palm-wine he has requested he orders the complainant to go home and wait, for it is the business of the paramount chief to take action in the matter. He summons his *maboyi* (assistants). He dispatches them separately to the villages where subordinate chiefs are installed, with instructions to inform them that "On the *nkandu*-day you must go to the paramount chief, and you will be told the day fixed upon". They present themselves according to these instructions and say: "Yes, O chief, we, whom you have sent for, have now come." He says: "Sit down in the village square and await me there. I shall come presently." When the paramount chief has arrived and taken up his position on his leopard skin he first asks: "Have you brought palm-wine with you?" They: "Yes, here it is." He: "Let us drink a calabash, and then I will disclose to you why I have summoned you." When they have

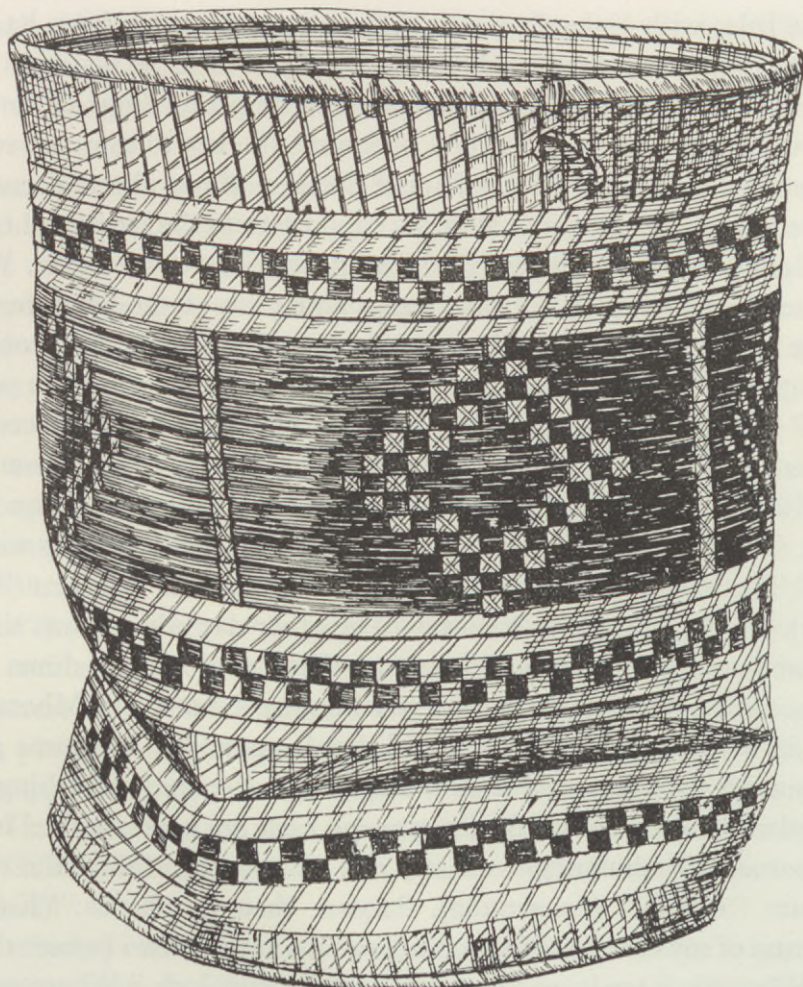


Fig. 33. Basket (*mbangu*), Sundi in Matadi (Laman 933).

finished drinking he says: "On the nkandu-day you must come with your people." They: "For what cause?" He: "We shall go to a village where a person has been murdered, and we shall ascertain the cause why he has been murdered."

When the paramount chief and his retinue arrive at the murderer's village he says without further ado: "If I am to sit down and judge in the case you must bring two pigs." They answer: "That is too much. We will give one, sit down." He: "No, I want two, do you hear?" They: "All right, here they are." He: "Receive them, assistants!" Then he says: "Bring here the man who has committed the murder." They: "We want to buy him free." He: "No, I shall have him. He is to be planted alive at my market, do you hear?" They: "No, accept two hundred pieces of cloth and a pig." He: "No. By no means. Him and him only I will have." After taking counsel among themselves they go and fetch the murderer and hand him over to the paramount chief. The latter then says: "Now bring three pigs, 250 pieces of cloth and a goat to mark you with chalk (i.e. the case is settled)." They must immediately obey the demands of the paramount

chief, since he rules with Lulendo-power. When everything has been handed over the paramount chief states the day on which the murderer is to be planted in the market, so that those who own him may come and witness the proceedings. When the planting has been carried out the paramount chief proclaims the law to those assembled.

The proceedings connected with a lawsuit are sometimes cheerful enough, for one who has a case against another goes with his supporters to the latter and takes with him a calabash of palm-wine. On his arrival he is given a mat to sit upon. When all have rested a little and smoked they are shown to a house where they may remain until the person sought has arrived. When they have eaten and are ready they come out and sit down. One with a gift of eloquence greets those present and asks: "Are you present, in full number?" The others: "Yes, we are all here. The other day we were surprised by the arrival of a youth who said: On the nkandu-day you may expect So-and-so to come here to the village to look for Such-and-such an one, and therefore we have now assembled here. Tell us now what the case is about, have the fines to do with a person, a pig or what?" The nzonzi stands up and says: "Young men!" Answer: "E-e-e" (called out in chorus). He then begins as follows: "The other day when I was sitting smoking my pipe, So-and-so suddenly came along the village road and sat down beside me. I: What do you come for? He: I come to you because NDONGI in Mbotani-village has made an end of my possessions. I: How did that happen? He: He came and borrowed them. How much? Two pigs and a gun, and I have demanded nothing until now. I went there and requested that he should give me back my possessions. I bwe (just so)." Answer in chorus: "Bwabobo (just exactly so)." They say: "Shall the suit be settled then?" Answer: "Agreed" (consenting). Answer then in chorus. "E-e-e-e! This, then, is the cause of my coming. May you now arrive at the mbazi (where the matter is to be decided). What you have loaned is two pigs and a flint-lock." Whereupon the nzonzi sits down.

The borrower's nzonzi gets up and sings: "Eh, in the east they killed each other. But we slept. (And so forth.) I bwe." "Bwabobo" (in chorus). When he has allowed them to agree in chorus he recapitulates all that the opponent's nzonzi has adduced. He retires with the one who has borrowed and asks him repeatedly whether that which the opponent adduces is true; for in this case they will at once agree on the day when they are to come back. In order not to make any mistake about the days they tie e.g. nine knots in a string, i.e. eight nkooyi¹ (32 days) and on the ninth (the fourth day after) they will be back. After every nkooyi-day a knot is cut off, and on the day appointed they come and collect their goods.

If, on the other hand, it is a matter of a suit against another village and the plaintiffs want to settle for past wrongs, the negotiations are often very dramatic and end inconclusively, as the guilty party will not acknowledge that it is in the wrong. Those, again, who feel secure of the rightness of their cause intend to declare war with gunshots, so that the losing party shall also pay those who are shot and wounded. In this

¹ Nkooyi, market day in Bwende, corresponding to nkandu.

connection both sides generally put up several persons as a pledge. These will then belong to the winning party. The plaintiff always sends a messenger to the defendant and instructs him to say: "On such-and-such a day I will come, for I have a suit that I want to settle with you."

Such a lawsuit attracts people from all the villages. Both parties summon the oldest and most skilful zinzonzi available to unravel and decide the case. Both parties may be represented by two or more zinzonzi and the suit may drag on for several weeks. Witnesses must be heard, and they must frequently confirm their evidence on oath. Those who have the floor are the zinzonzi, who develop all the technique and oratory of which they are master. They execute their nzonzi-dances and give in songs an indication of what they have to say. The scene of the lawsuit is as a rule the public square of the village of the accused. It is conducted publicly and there is a great attendance. All negotiations begin in a cheerful mood, the zinzonzi going up to the accused, sitting down on the mats provided and drinking palm-wine which is offered by both parties. When the people are all assembled and the parties of the plaintiff and the defendant are all present "like the teeth in the pig's mouth", the nzonzi for the plaintiff gets up to dance, sing and call out certain phrases to which the people reply in chorus, in order to increase interest and enhance the general mood during the cognizance of the case. The following phrases, for instance, may be used: "Tu zimfumu (we chiefs)." — "Tu nganga ye nganga (we nganga are nganga)." — "Have you received the matter yabonga kyau (the one I am referring to), yabonga tambula." — "Yatambula (I have got it)!" — "I got it." — "If he has not received it, I will not accept it, icki (it is finished)." — "Mpiaa (finished)!"

If it is not a criminal case or does not need to be investigated, then "dyambu Kongo". — "Kindele (have patience). If he has not seen it, if I had seen it. But when I saw it ku nsi (on the ground)." — "Just so, ku nsi." — "Just so. If it is trying to lie, then you are a ngyangya (cheat) nga." — "Ngyangya. E nsiilu ka yaa ko (is it not so acted)?" — "Yayooyo (just so). If you want to speak the truth properly, then speak out ye butu (frankness)!" — "Tenduka (in wounds, reveal). If anyone wishes to cheat another it is his business, but if you then cheat the fines for you and me will be like budimbu (resin)." — "Nana (stick). If two created the tail on the syasya (that which holds the spring in the gun)." — "Samuna nganzula (smith). When I saw this, if it was not I who saw it, e lutambula (give me an answer)." — "Aayi (yes)." — "Mataku ntukulu ndambi.¹ What you have done to me momo ntandu (above, high in the height)." — "Va banda (or below, low, in requesting goods)." — "I have heard it, I suppose I have seen it." — "Naana (by no means). The commandment is sacred. Eh, this is his, eh this." — "His. What I have seen, I am looking at it." — "This." And so forth.

After this the defendant's nzonzi gets up, dances, runs and lets the people reply to his cries in chorus. He then continues, telling them by way of introduction how he was called to be present and how he presented himself, what he has gathered concerning

¹ An expression of pain in the buttocks by the one who loses the suit.

the case, and exclaiming: "Kani ka bwa ko (is it not so)?"—Answer: "Bwa bo-bo-ee (just so)!"—Again: "E-e yooyo, telema nzanza, yo yooyo e, e bo-bo (eh, that over there, stand upright, just that over there e-e, just so)!" This may be repeated several times in the course of the suit, by way of agreeing to what the nzonzi has said. But the defendant first takes up what the plaintiff has said and lets the people answer in chorus. He then adds by way of introduction what he knows and lets those present confirm it in the same way as with earlier speakers.

The plaintiff's nzonzi starts off with what the former adduced from his side, and then continues with great eloquence, using similes and set exclamations to warm up to the subject, meantime waving and pointing with his mfunka (whisk). He perhaps exclaims: "Babongele sompa (they have borrowed)." Answer in chorus: "Basompele (they borrowed)." Or: "Babongele yiba (they have stolen)." Answer: "Bayibidi (they stole)" and so forth. Among suitable similes and proverbs the following may be mentioned. "If you seek kunda (protection), see to it that you are in the right, otherwise the kunda-protection will plunge you into ruin." This implies that if you have not good reason to seek protection, you will get into straits; or in other words, if you think of accusing someone, see to it that your accusation is well-founded, for otherwise you will be fined for making false charges. "Do not listen to your opponent's nzonzi, for the path he takes, can that be the right road?" In short: may he speak and speak, have you not a heart (memory) to keep his with? When he has finished, you may go on. "You vilify one who is uglier than yourself. But do you know the one who is handsomer than you?" Which may be interpreted: do not plume yourself on your success; it will be the turn of others another time. "The strength of the garrulous lies in their garrulity." The meaning being, of course, that the talkative have no real strength, for if they must fight with someone they cannot win (fig. 7: a, 16).

The defendant once more resumes what the plaintiff has said, and adds what he has to answer to the latter's questions, the people chanting agreement in chorus. The debate goes forward in such a way that the plaintiff puts different questions every time he speaks, and the defendant must answer all these. The witnesses are only cross-examined, when the matter has progressed so far that the answer requires witnesses. While the zinzonzi are speaking the plaintiff places a palm-nut, stick, stone or the like on the ground as a reminder of a question that his opponent must answer satisfactorily, *vuza kyumvu* (pull up the question). If he cannot do this, a stick or some other objects is generally stuck into the ground. If the answers are satisfactory, the opponent will now put his questions, which of course must also be answered. Thus the case progresses, with question and answer; and the one who is unable to give satisfactory answers loses.

When a witness is to be heard, he must confirm his evidence on oath, saying for instance, "by my lately deceased brother", "by my late mother", or "by the scars on my body, I shall speak the truth". The witness may also endorse his evidence by *nkisi Malwangu*, *nkisi Mbumba Kindongo*, *nkisi Nkondi* or some other *nkisi*. The witness

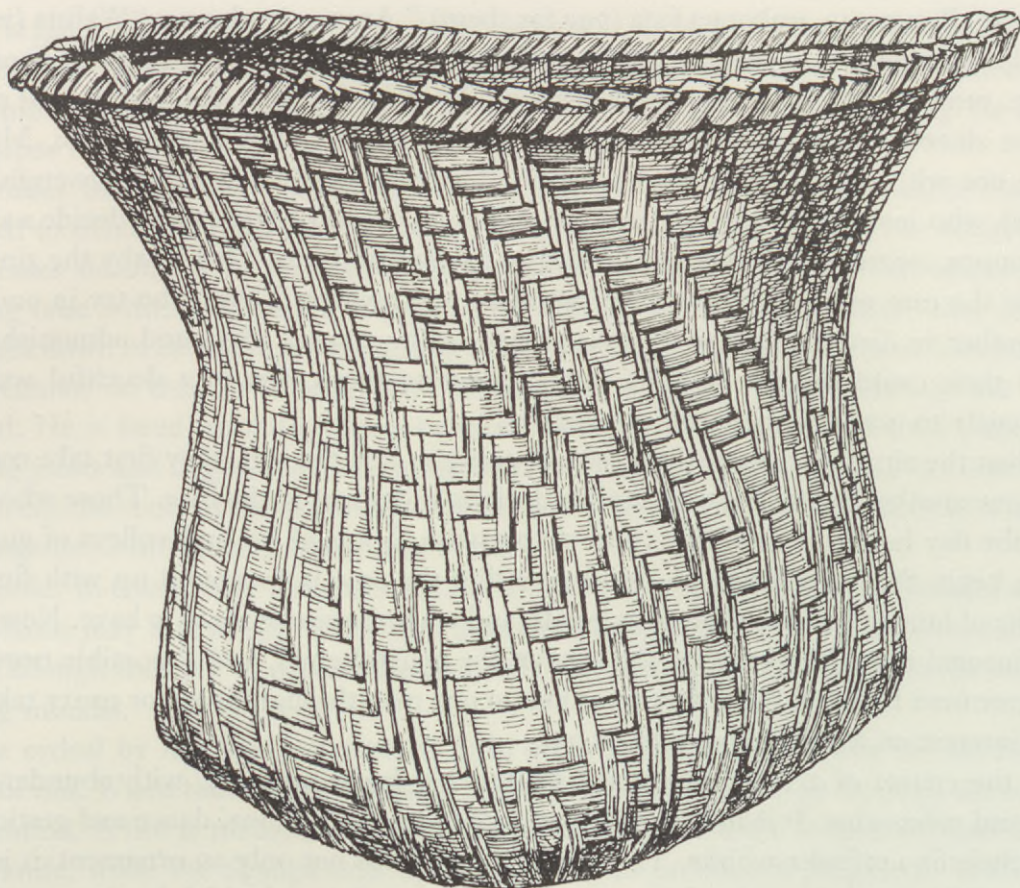


Fig. 34. Basket (*mpidi*), Sudi in Mukimbungu (Laman 986).

may also dance in nkisi Nakongo's house. When an oath is taken the witness sometimes says: "Great sun, may Nzambi put an end to the nails of my hands and feet", which implies that Nzambi will exterminate his whole kanda. One who gives false witness on oath will be overtaken, thanks to this oath, by all kinds of illnesses. A number take the oath by putting their hands to their head and drawing one hand over the face, saying: "Great sun, I have neither father nor mother, these goods that my brother is going to leave, I cannot take." He may then not take the inheritance if he is guilty of swearing a false oath.

On other occasions, the person confirming something on oath may say: "Nakongo, zindaula ndovye-vye (may I die from a dove-shot)", and he is thereby considered to have commended himself to death. To die from a dove-shot was by the older natives considered very disgraceful. The witnesses are first heard privately by the zinzonzi, and sometimes it is not necessary for them to appear publicly. Others who participate in or are guilty parties in the suit are also heard privately. When it is understood that they are not telling the truth, they must go through the mbundu or bau ordeals.

When the plaintiff states his case he says, for instance: "You have taken his pigs by

cheating. Bonga zau, wabonga futa (pay for them)." Answer in chorus: "Wafuta (pay)." But the defendant may perhaps refuse, and says: "Eh, have I taken his pigs by cheating, tu (i.e. tumuka, refusal)." Answer in chorus: "Nyamba (negative expression, will not)."

The zinzonzi make their charges by putting questions; they are mfundisi. Mfundisi is the one with whom a person has a lawsuit. There are also in many cases nlwengisi (advisors), who instruct the nzonzi how he shall speak. One person cannot decide a suit or pronounce sentence, for this would lead to fighting and war. This is why the zinzonzi decide the case publicly by means of question and answer. Those who try in one way or another to distort the case are taken aside to the council place and admonished to plead their cause rightly, and the same applies to those who in a deceitful way try usuriously to grab too much for themselves.

When the zinzonzi have realized who is going to lose the suit, they first take counsel with one another before announcing the decisive judgment in the case. Those who have won the day hasten to celebrate their victory with shouts of joy and volleys of gunfire. Then begin the negotiations to decide whether the case is to wound up with fines or forfeits of human beings, animals or goods, and what the zinzonzi are to have. Now, too, the zinzonzi must intervene for the sake of the general good, and if possible negotiate an agreement between the villages, so that no one may through deceit or usury take too high interest on loaned goods and so on.

In the course of a more protracted lawsuit big feasts are held, with abundance of food and palm-wine. It is indeed an experience to see the zinzonzi dance and gesticulate with their fine mfunka-whisks. The nzonzi's mfunka is not only an ornament, it is also a sign of dignity. It is made of the end of a buffalo's tail round which has been wrapped red blanket-cloth from the folds of which may be glimpsed a finely carved head of wood or ivory. In addition to this, the whisk is protected with magic knots etc. against black magic. With his mfunka the zonzzi accompanies his gestures, he sometimes throws it up in the air, turns a somersault, approaching those sitting down, and cries: "E-e, cry out!" Answer: "Wa-ooo-wo." He then sings a song, for example: "A pig that begs (is tame), ma ku, ma ku (come here, come here, and you will get food)." This is constantly repeated (fig. 7: a, 16).

Among the suits requiring ordeal may be noted those having to do with black magic, and those in which an accused person absolutely denies a crime. In cases of black magic, nganga Ngombo or nganga Ntadi is summoned to smell out the guilty party. After having gone through all makanda, he points out one, and then continues to smell all the members until the culprit can be pointed out. But several persons may sometimes be under suspicion. These must now eat nkasa-poison. If the culprit eats this it finds its way to the so-called kundu-magic gland and he falls down dead, or gets diarrhoea, which is also a proof of his guilt. If, however, the suspected person succeeds in vomiting up the poison, or in keeping on his feet by dancing until the following morning, he is innocent, and this implies that the poison has not found any kundu-gland. All the persons pointed out as under suspicion must go through the same ordeal. If none of

them is guilty, others are ordered to take the poison, or else an attempt is made to find out another cause, e.g. that the bakisi have punished the injured party for some crime. The culprit is executed in one way or another if he does not die immediately. As a rule the corpse is buried.

In order to ascertain whether an accused person is guilty or not, another may be ordered to drink mbundu-poison. This procedure is adopted, as a rule, in connection with cases dealing with theft and adultery, and where it is feared that someone is bearing false witness. Mbundu acquits an accused person when the latter, after drinking, falls down in convulsions and makes water strongly in the midst of those assembled. If he cannot do this, he is taken with convulsions in which fingers and legs are contracted. He is freed from his cramp by being beaten with canes all over the body, including joints and fingers. Juice from the minkunzya-plant is poured into his nose, and juice from the roots of the mpandabala-tree with scrapings of bark mixed into a medicine together with water is given him to drink.

In order to ensure that a suspect shall be found guilty in the ordeal by poison, spiteful persons may mix drops of the very poisonous cactus-plant mbisu in the medicine-drink, though they try to protect the accused from such tricks by using guards and invoking minkisi.

The ordeal by fire (bau) is resorted to in order to ascertain whether the accused is lying or not. When the nganga thinks he is guilty, he urges him to go through the ordeal in question. A fire is made, and a knife heated up in it, or more frequently a so-called tanzi-knife, while the nganga calls upon nkisi Bau to pronounce judgment. When the knife is red, the nganga draws a bunch of pisang-roots over one of the suspect's legs. He then strikes the same place lightly with the knife. If the skin is scorched off, the accused is guilty. In a similar ordeal the suspect must take a stone out of a pot of boiling oil.

A person under suspicion might also be given a bowl in which to fetch water from a spring. The bowl, however, has many small holes in the bottom, which may be blocked up with slime, but which may also be clean. When the water is fetched, it leaks out on the way home, and the unfortunate man is then found guilty.

The above-mentioned ordeals are conducted by the banganga, who have their special minkisi for the purpose, so that the judgments thus arrived at are considered by the people to be decisive. Generally an attempt is made to find the person who is really guilty, and the attempt is often successful, for thanks to their great experience, the banganga are able to follow the reactions of the accused in the course of the proceedings, and they can then draw the necessary conclusions.

CHAPTER IX

Social Organization

The social and political organization conforms with the kivila. There is no uniform tribe in the proper sense of the term, but the related luvila have in reality kept together as if they had constituted, almost one single people. Now the one and now the other mvila has in the course of time succeeded in attaining to a position of dominating influence. This applies, for instance, to the Kongo on the south bank of the Congo and to the Sundi on the north bank. From the Sundi have sprung other tuvila, as for example the Bwende, Yombe, Loango, Kamba and Bembe, and these have in their turn also seized the power over considerable areas. Similar conditions obtained on the south bank of the Congo.

The arrival of the whites undoubtedly exercised a unifying influence on the Kongo-speaking peoples. Europeanization was otherwise evidenced mostly in the trade that pushed up towards Stanley Pool along the Congo and Nyari-Kwilu valleys. When the first Catholic period came to an end the connections between the Sundi and those living in the south were still very slight. One or another caravan did, it is true, continue southwards to the coast and the trading houses established there; but it was only after STANLEY's expeditions that connections became livelier. The change among the people, however, was both socially and politically very slow, for at the time of my arrival in the Congo large parts of the country in the north were still quite untouched by Europeanization.

In every village (vata) there lived one or several makanda belonging to the same mvila. The purchased prisoners-of-war, on the other hand, were as a rule strangers belonging to other makanda; and the same applied to some few families that has immigrated to the district, bought land and been accepted as members of the village community. Each kanda was divided into ngudi (mother-families), and these in their turn were divided into nzo (house-families) or myelo mya nzo (housedoor-families), the latter constituting the smallest unit in the mvila. Each nzo unit had a head, and there was generally a chief to each village, and in several cases a paramount chief who lived in a mbanza (head village or town) and ruled over the makanda within a wider region. If the latter was a forceful regent he might impose his authority also on small stranger makanda and zinzo.

The unifying factor is thus seen to be the kanda organization, which implies that

those makanda having the same ngudi belong together. This hereditary constitution is based upon the traditions concerning the origin of the makanda. In practice this implies that everyone, despite his own interests, strives for the welfare and prosperity of his kanda. If a schism of a more serious nature does nevertheless arise, those who have occasioned this move to some other place.

Every kanda has its chief, and at a meeting for the purpose the villagers may decide to appoint a chief for the village if a suitable candidate is available. He must be wise and energetic and be able to direct the affairs of the village in a creditable way. If no suitable person is available a man from another village may be requested to come and take up the position of chief. When a new village is founded every precaution is taken to ensure that no alien or hostile makanda take part in the proceedings. If anyone belonging to another kanda is to be accepted as a member of the village community this can only be done after an agreement.

It is the makanda-chiefs who together with the elders make laws and regulations and represent their relatives at the latter's lawsuits and in connection with their purchases and contracts and so forth. The kanda-chief is the oldest member of the kanda, whom all must obey and honour. He must know the zinzo in the village, the zinzo among which it is permitted to marry, and all the lawsuits that have taken place between his kanda and other makanda. The chief must of course also know the traditions of his kanda and his ancestors and must communicate these to those who will one day succeed him. The chiefs know their predecessors and are fond of telling stories of them and their deeds. The traditions are related with a wealth of detail, for all are extremely interested in the history and deeds of their kanda and of neighbouring makanda.

If no suitable male adult is available a capable woman may be appointed chief, and it is then incumbent upon her in the same way to initiate her male successor into everything concerning the kanda. Wherever the kanda-chief may go and whatever he may be doing, he must always be accompanied by a younger brother. The latter must tap palm-wine, look after the domestic animals, go hunting for him and do business on trading trips. On his side, the kanda-chief must see that his younger brothers and sisters are well provided for, as regards food and everything else. He stores their goods and sees to it that they marry advantageously.

In a village it is, certainly, possible to distinguish certain categories of individuals, but these do not constitute any definite class or group of their own, rather are the villagers to be regarded, on the whole, as a single big nzo within which each person performs his special tasks. There are consequently no organized classes invested with special privileges and of which one may become a member, or from which, in case of need, one may be excluded. It cannot, however, be denied that there is in several respects a difference between the free-born and the bought slaves and their children. If they are capable and clever the latter do, though, generally arrive at the same social position as the free-born; otherwise, they are often sold again. But in these circumstances also the free may be sold.

Among the most influential villagers are the banganga. They are feared on account of their magic powers, but they are also revered, since these same powers also enable them to make rain, to give happiness and blessing. The banganga do not constitute a caste of priests. Anyone who has fallen ill or become possessed thanks to a nkisi may dedicate himself to the latter and get to know the nkisi in question by making it, whereupon he becomes a nganga. He may have one or several minkisi with which he treats sick persons or performs other functions. The more minkisi a nganga has, the more comprehensive will be his activities and the greater will be his earnings. The banganga are, however, envious of one another, and in order to win more honour, fame and power than his colleagues a nganga will generally try to counteract them by magic means. If the banganga are also clever zinzonzi or chiefs their reputation and influence will be very much enhanced.

The bakuluntu (elders) are old, experienced men, the heads of zinzos, wealthy and energetic persons who have through their good sense acquired great influence. Such men are seldom appointed to an official post, they are entitled to make their influence felt whenever they can, and in this way they gain the confidence of the people. As bandaanu (nobles) are accounted only those who are of a chief's kanda, if they are peaceable and popular. If such a man lapses into violence, if he loses lawsuits and possessions he will forfeit the respect of the people and be "degraded" like a chief who neglects his duties.

The bamfumu (masters, free-born) are the real members of the kanda and have the same mvila as the mother. Out of consideration for the father's kanda they are called baana (children) and batekolo (grandchildren) butwa ku (born in) his kanda or funu (descended) from his kanda. These latter constitute a separate group under the name of the baleeke (younger ones) or batekolo (grandchildren). Others are called ngwa nkazi (maternal uncle) or ngwa nkazi with baana ba nkazi (nephews and nieces) in one or more generations.

The children of slaves often constitute a separate group, but they may be accepted as free members of the kanda if their kanda has died out or if it is not able to buy them free. As some makanda have in more recent times achieved considerable prosperity they may look up relatives sold in less prosperous days and redeem them together with their children.

There exists one form of slavery (kinanga) which is in outer respects rather unnoticeable, as the slaves here, in the majority of cases, bear the same relation to their masters as do the baleeke to their mfumu. If the slaves are very ill-treated they have a certain right to flee to another village and throw themselves upon its protection. If through hard work and with his master's consent a slave has been able to accumulate possessions enough to buy himself free he may do so, and may then remain in the village of his own free choice or return to his own country again.

The slaves have as a rule been sold because their owners have needed assets to pay their debts and expenses for lawsuits. The slaves may also have been sold during

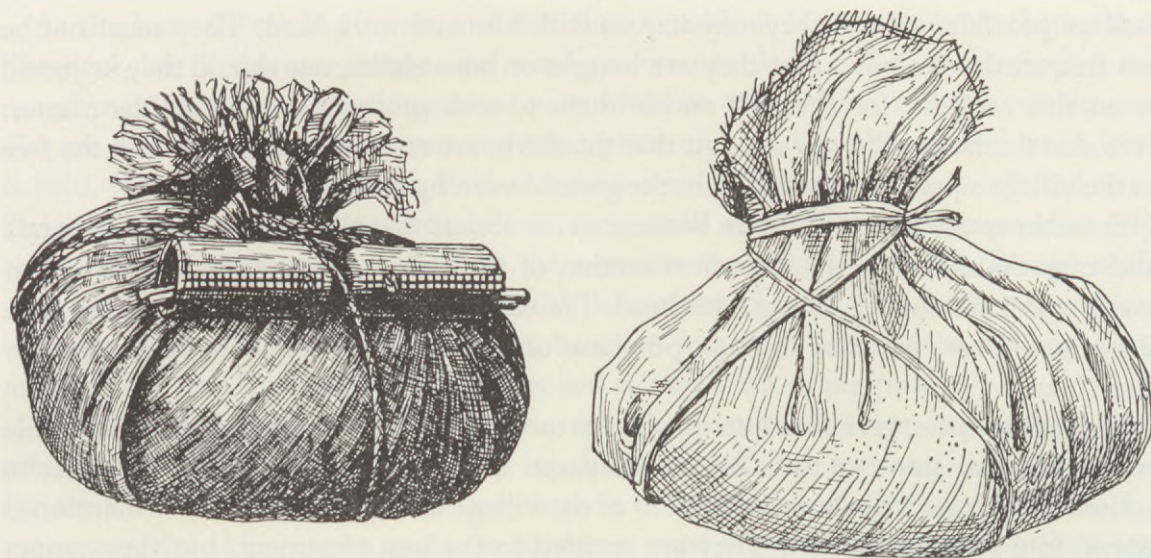


Fig. 35. A, *Nkisi Nkita Nsumbu, Sundi in Lolo* (Laman 1357). B, *Nkisi Nkita Niumbu, Sundi in Lolo* (Laman 1170).

periods of famine or because they have been thievish, wanton or otherwise impossible, and therefore degraded from their free-born rank. A free-born native must sometimes pledge himself for life on account of some debt, or he may be taken prisoner in the course of a campaign or on a trading trip. Criminals who have not forfeited their lives are sometimes punished with slavery.

The bought slaves are variously named. Among the Bwende and other peoples in the north they are called kongo, since they have come from makanda accounting themselves as Kongo. For the same reason they are called sundi and so on in other districts. Otherwise, the general designation is minanga (sing. nnanga; cf. nnanga, a rich person), bawanyi, bibunu, mvika and baana ba bula (children of the village).

The children and grandchildren of bought persons are held in higher respect than their parents. They are called, inter alia, nzimbu, baana ba nzimbu (master of possessions), baana ba mbongo or baana ba mbata ntu (because the goods that were paid for them were carried on the head). If one or more of them is in debt—e.g. the marriage-goods have not been paid in full to the father with whom the children have been reared—, they are called baana ba makunzi (children of the house-posts), baana ba nzo (children of the house) or baana ba mbuta (born children in the kanda). They may not be called slaves or regarded as such. If when they are grown up they desire to return to their mother's kanda they may do so on an agreement to this effect being arrived at.

If there are good relations in a village the slaves may stand on a good footing with the free-born, and the busana that has hitherto obtained then disappears. This is also referred to as the "clearing of the eyes for the sake of the possessions", for "possessions do not quarrel with anyone". It is incumbent upon the slave-owner to treat his slaves as

well as possible, so that they may stay on with him and work hard. They must not be too frequently reminded that they are bought or born slaves, nor should they be jeered at on this account, for this will entitle them to seek protection with a milder master. It is also the latter's duty to see to it that the slaves are assembled together with the free in the village square to participate in the general evening meal.

Sometimes the slaves' children become so numerous that they form a separate kanda and may therefore live in their own section of the village. Here they will take their meals under the supervision of their head. The slave-owners must also see that the male slaves get wives, whether through purchase or through marrying into slave zinzo or free zinzo.

The slaves must give absolute obedience to their masters, must be mild and docile and in this way improve their future prospects. They live like other zinzo as a rule in houses of their own in the same section of the village as their owners, or, as mentioned above, in a separate section. They are entitled to the best treatment, but they cannot escape being sold or used as human pledges. Among their rights is also the right to receive a share in what they earn. Thus if they are capable and have right-thinking owners they have a possibility of buying their freedom, just as their kanda has the right to redeem them. Certain slaves are granted the privilege of being incorporated with their owners kanda, which may happen if they have no kanda of their own or live too far away from their own. In this case their children often remain in the village and form their own kanda with its own zinzo in the same social position as the free-born in the village. From their ranks may arise great and famous men, who may become the heirs of their masters and even be installed in their chieftain's office.

A man who has for one reason or another been taken prisoner may be ransomed at once; but if his kanda lacks the necessary resources for this he remains a slave and his master may sell him or keep him as he chooses. If the slave is kept he must generally swear an oath before some powerful nkisi that he will not fly. If a bought slave runs back to his old home he must be returned, or else the purchase money must be paid back with interest. Also a prisoner who has become a slave may, if he is energetic and capable, attain to a higher position in the community and become his master's right-hand man and helper.

The natives not infrequently move their villages, and this for a variety of reasons. They may be looking for better hunting grounds, fishing waters and soil, a pleasant hill or an attractive palm grove, especially if they have for some years had banana-plantations or other crops there. Ominous events may also constitute a motive. If there are many deaths, if a great chief has died, if "knocking spirits" ascribed to the dead manifest themselves, if the lightning strikes often or there are frequent storms they will soon move elsewhere. Similarly, if a road carrying a heavy traffic is laid near the village, many will move, for they consider that people passing the village may "take" the children's souls by magic. Makanda may often move from each other's vicinity if disputes arise when they multiply.

As the huts are made of grass and are dismountable it is easy to move them short distances, but if the new village-site is too remote new huts will be built. Such a removal may from the hygienic point of view often be very useful, as both vermin and dirt are thus got rid of. If the removal takes place under favourable conditions, a feast is held, with dancing and much food and palm-wine. This is sometimes referred to as "tripping over stumps", because while carrying walls and roof the natives so often trip over roots and stumps. On arrival at the new site the villagers invoke through their *minkisi* the spirits and *bandoki* that possibly exist there and say: "Eh, listen to me! Now we have come to build here. If there are here any female or male *ndoki*, old or young, may he then slay his animals in the grass and refrain from eating people."

There is not organized taxation. The taxes and levies that are imposed are very arbitrary. What the natives refer to as *mpaku* (tax) is often a matter of a fine imposed for the contravention of prohibitions, breach of contracts or other agreements. If a more powerful *nkisi* is to be made the *banganga* must set up defensive prohibitions and dig pits at the forking of the ways, so that every passer-by who has not composed a more powerful *nkisi* must give a measure of salt or gunpowder.

A stranger must always be very careful when travelling through a village or staying there, for the villagers try to extract tax-money in a variety of ways. If, for instance, one tethers a goat at the enclosure to the chief's court, one forfeits the animal to him as tax. If the stranger wishes to till a piece of ground, tap wine in a palm grove during a certain period, or hunt or fish, tax is immediately imposed in the form of certain quantities of the harvest, the palm-wine, the game or the fish taken.

Those passing through a village or taking part in market trade will have a certain tax exacted by the chief ruling over the village or the market. A market may as a rule not begin until through his agent the market-chief has taken the goods he wants for himself. Strangers must pay a small part of the goods they brought with them, such as salt, gunpowder etc. A definite charge at different places or for different goods, on the other hand, is not laid down.

If a strange caravan passes through certain village districts it must pay a tax to the district chief, and there is in this connection protracted bargaining, as the chief will try to enforce as large a payment as possible. Trade caravans going down the coast generally make a stay with old friends where they can spend the night, rest and do business. On the journey down they give cola-nuts and tobacco, receiving palm-wine and food in return. On the journey home, on the other hand, they must pay a part of their goods, e.g. salt, gunpowder, cloth and the like, as a gift of gratitude. At bridges and ferries dues or ferry-money are always exacted.

A general tax is levied on the death of a chief. Both subjects and strangers must give funeral gifts, the last-mentioned of the goods they have with them, and not infrequently through-permits are granted only after payment of the burial tax. If this is not paid voluntarily the tax is taken by force from the caravan and its goods damaged as much as possible. If a paramount chief has died a heavy tax is levied in the entire

district over which he has ruled, so that he may be buried as required by tradition. There have been several paramount chiefs who have not received the burials to which they have been entitled, as the tax in question has not been duly paid.

A rather peculiar tax is that which must be paid by the paramount chief to the chiefs who appoint him and who are present at his coronation. This consists of big bales of cloth, many pigs and goats; and the prestige of the newly appointed chief will depend on the amount he is able to pay. Sometimes the Sundi also refer to gifts and sacrifices to certain *minkisi* and ancestors etc. as *mpaku*. As a rule, all taxes belonging to the *mvila* and *kanda* are paid willingly, while others, on the other hand, are paid with reluctance. Strangers, however, are forced to do so, as they will otherwise be exposed to all sorts of reprisals—members of caravans, for example, may be taken prisoner as pledges, etc.



Fig. 36. Nkisi Mbenza, Sundi in Lolo (Laman 1358).

CHAPTER X

Administration

As the Kongo and the Sundi were not a single tribe they had no common paramount chief, but according as the country was divided up between the various makanda the latter had chiefs of their own, who might sometimes also rule over other makanda in their district, as these were not strong enough to keep their independence. Thanks to the kivila the Kongo and Sundi groups that had immigrated to the north bank of the Congo maintained unbroken community with their relatives on the south bank of the river during the period in which the connections between the two banks were still very lively. When wars began to rage on the south bank and the makanda that had removed to the north bank multiplied and continued to push on up-country in various directions towards the Nyari-Kwilu Valley, relations with the south bank were broken off for a very long time. During this period the Sundi kingdom became a great power under paramount chief MANSUNDI. The paramount chief of the Kongo kingdom ruled in San Salvador. When the connections between the two banks of the Congo were resumed in earnest, however, considerable differences in language, customs and usages had arisen between the north and the south.

The history of the Sundi has already been related. It must suffice here to remind the reader that on account of the rapid growth of the population and severe famines a group had emigrated to Mayombe to establish its rule, whence other groups in their return migrated southward to Loango. In this way many kingdoms or tribal groups arose, each being ruled by a paramount chief, as for instance the Mayombe under Mayombe, the Loango (or Vili) under Maloango, the (ka)Kongo under Makongo, the Kabinda under Mabinda and the tract about Boma under Mamboma. When, after H. STANLEY's journey through the country, the Congo began to be occupied in earnest by the Europeans, the days of the paramount chiefs were on the whole a vanished epoch. There were only a few left who still kept up connections with the coast and the trading houses situated there. The traditions concerning these regents are, however, still alive.

The chiefs of a later period higher up-country were only the heads of villages (mfumu a bwala), who inherited their office and ruled over their kanda. There were as many chiefs in the village as there were makanda. Farther south might be found one or another chief ruling over several villages belonging to the same kanda and even over

other friendly makanda living in the same tract. In still more southerly regions the people began to appoint chiefs who were called mbyazi (regents, from byala, to rule). These had different grades with different names, according to the number of their subjects and their wealth. Towards the coastal regions where, thanks to the trade with the coast, there were richer chiefs, the kingdoms were larger and the regent was called, as for example in Kongo dya Ntotila, ntinu; but here, too, there were different grades.

In general it may be said that higher up-country, where the people were poorer and lived isolated in their villages, the dignity and power of the chief were less than was the case farther south, where there were connections with Kongo dya Ntotila and the trading houses of the whites on the coast. This may be observed especially clearly in the region on the south bank between the coast and Stanley Pool. But it was nevertheless not possible to bury the last great Nsundi chief in the Inkisi country, who died in 1835, in accordance with his dignity, for even at this time poverty was so great that the necessary burial taxes could not be collected. This was the lot of many others, also, as for example Maloango, since despite appeals to the European authorities the means required were not forthcoming.¹ It is, however, quite evident that even long before STANLEY passed through the country the people had entered a period of degeneration, of which one expression was the ever more rapid dissolution of the chieftainships and the traditional order.

The ordinary office of head of the nzo and the kanda in the villages was inherited by the one who was oldest, wisest and wealthiest, to the end that he might preserve and improve the kanda and its power. Such chiefs were thus not elected by the people or after it had been ascertained whether the deceased ancestors approved the choice or not, nor was there in these cases any investiture with kiyaazi.

According to the tradition, MANSUNDI had appropriated kiyaazi (ndembo) from ntinu a Kongo dya Ntotila, and therewith got the right of succession after the latter. This ndembo, like others of the same kind, was on account of its magic power also called nkisi. Ndembo consisted of a lukobe (shell, bark-box or something of the sort), and contained above all the chalk with which the chief was to be smeared on the occasion of his investiture. In addition to ndembo, there was later a kiyaazi called bwene or wene, and one which was called mbenza or kimbenza. The first-mentioned was used for the coronation among some makanda in Mayombe, the other among the Mbenza people. The coronation was also referred to as "ascending the divungu-throne", among the Bwende, bweno. The coronation had a religious import, and through the tests to which the aspirant was subjected it was sanctioned by the ancestors. Both power and religious authority were thus combined in the regency (cf. fig. 5).

The ntinu office seems always to have been connected with the murder of a member of the kanda, so that the aspirant to the throne could thereby prove his authority. The first ntinu, LUKENI, thus killed a brother-in-law. One might equally, however, slay a

¹ Concerning the latter and his coronation cf. DENNET, *At the Back of the Black Man's Mind*, London 1906, chaps. 2 and 3.

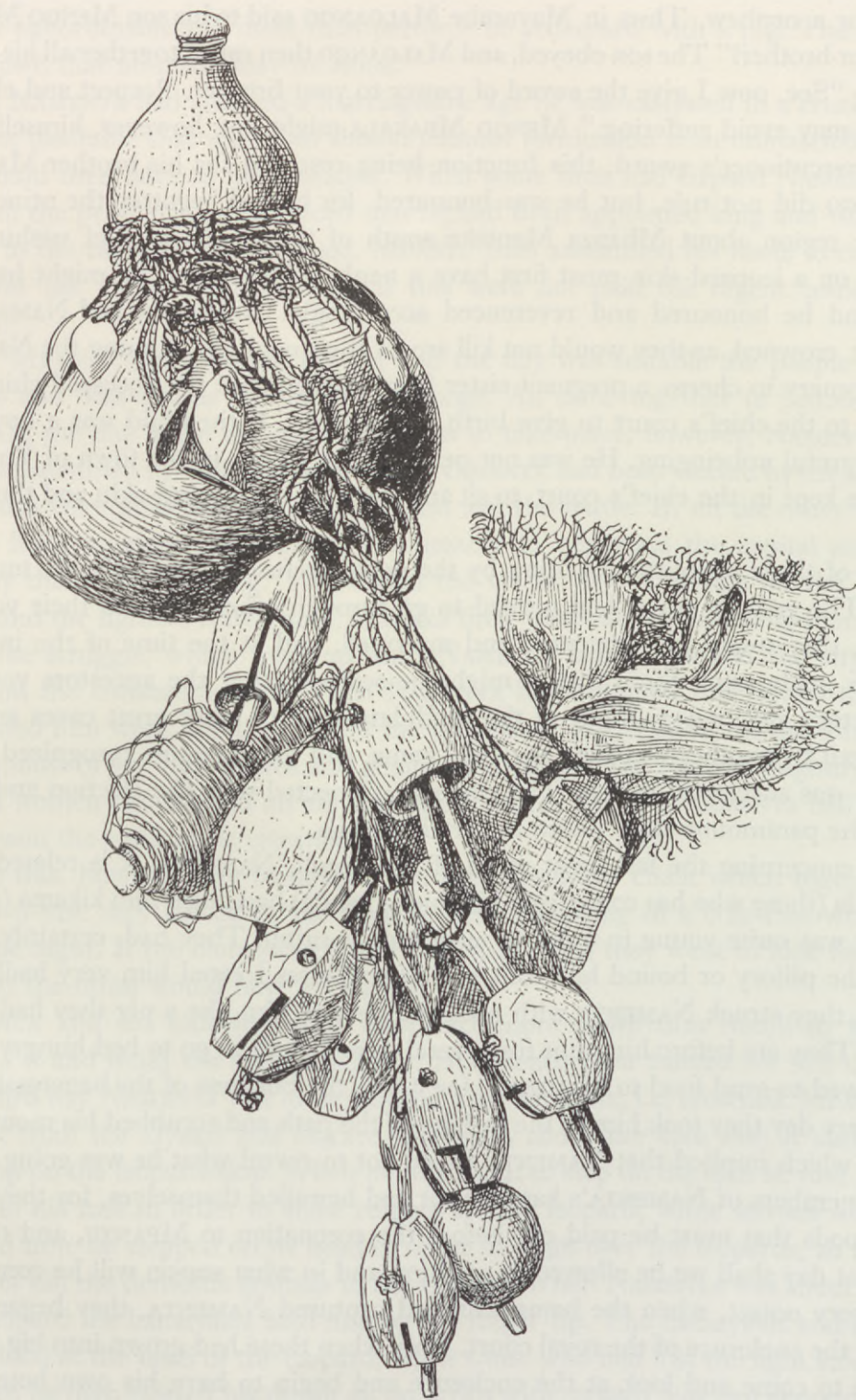


Fig. 37. Nkisi Londa dianlungu, Sudi in Mukimungu (Laman 565).

brother or a nephew. Thus in Mayombe MALOANGO said to his son MENO MBAKALA: "Kill your brother!" The son obeyed, and MALOANGO then called together all his children and said: "See, now I give the sword of power to your brother. Respect and obey him, that you may avoid suffering." MENO MBAKALA might not, however, himself keep or use the executioner's sword, this function being reserved for his brother MANSANGA. MALOANGO did not rule, but he was honoured, for he had begotten the ntinu-regent.

In the region about Mbanza Manteke south of the Congo a chief wishing to be crowned on a leopard-skin must first have a nephew killed, that he might have great power and be honoured and revered accordingly. NSANGALA and NAMABOOKILA were not crowned, as they would not kill any of their nephews. Among the Navunda it was customary to choose a pregnant sister from the kanda of the deceased chief and to take her to the chief's court to give birth to her child. If the child was a boy he was given a careful upbringing. He was not permitted to go out in the town of Vunda, but had to be kept in the chief's court, to sit and sleep on the leopard-skin and the nkuwumat.

Many of those appointed as ntinu by the people refused to commit the murder required. The greatest ntinu had instead to go through other tests. In their youth, for example, they might be tormented and martyred, and at the time of the investiture have war made upon them that it might be seen whether the ancestors vouchsafed them victory and power. Some of the candidates had to enter great caves and try to find an exit by another way than they had come, and the ancestors recognized only the one who was successful in this. The customs connected with the election and investiture of the paramount chief varied in certain details.

Thus concerning the last great ntinu of the Sundi, NAMENTA, it is related that the bamayaala (those who have come from his chief's kanda) had taken him kikama (prisoner) when he was quite young in order to elect him as ntinu. They had, certainly, not put him in the pillory or bound him, but had nevertheless treated him very badly. Every morning they struck NAMENTA with rods and treated him like a pig they had been set to tend. They ate before him, but for several days he had to go to bed hungry. No one was allowed to send food to NAMENTA, for it was the business of the bamayaala to keep him. Every day they took him to the forking of the path and scrubbed his mouth on the ground, which implied that NAMENTA swore not to reveal what he was going through. All the members of NAMENTA's kanda wept and bewailed themselves, for they thought of the goods that must be paid out before the coronation to MPANZU, and they said: "On what day shall we be allowed to see him, and in what season will he come back?" At the very outset, when the bamayaala had captured NAMENTA, they began to plant trees for the enclosure of the royal court. Only when these had grown into big trees was he freed to come and look at the enclosure and begin to have his own houses built. He was not, however, permitted to go alone, but was always accompanied by a crowd of bamayaala keeping close watch. They even had to keep watch over NAMENTA when he made water or emptied his bowels, for if he went alone he would be taken by out-

siders or subordinates and must then perforce be redeemed with a pig. The tradition lays it down that no ntinu may be alone.

When NAMENTA had attained a marriageable age he was castrated in a cruel way, for it was not desirable that the ntinu should commit fornication with unmarried women, as he would then have to be beheaded. When some time had elapsed NAMENTA summoned all the people and announced that he had been appointed king and would now proceed to the capital to be crowned. MPANZU then assembled his hosts to collect the coronation tax from the Sundi, for if this were not paid the regent could not be crowned.¹

When MPANZU had collected the tax and the day was suitable the people sounded trumpets and beat drums (tampala) and gongs. All came together to proceed to the capital. On the day when the coronation was to take place, however, NAMENTA's enemies also assembled to wage war on him. If NAMENTA had been elected by the ancestors, his enemies were powerless against him, and lost the battle. If, on the other hand, he had not been so elected, NAMENTA was unable to penetrate the capital and would inevitably die in the fighting. This lasted the whole day. A village on the way was reached and the fighters rested here, to shake their weapons the following morning and resume the struggle, which went on until NAMENTA had penetrated the city and set himself on the coronation-mat. When NAMENTA had obtained the victory those who had resisted him wept, for they feared his vengeance. His friends, on the other hand, uttered shouts of joy, beat drums and gongs, fired salvoes and rejoiced mightily. Young men and women danced and all ate and drank much, for now NAMENTA had by force of arms won the right to be crowned.

Before this, however, the bamayaala hid the coronation chalk which together with the nkuwu-mat they placed in the kiyaaazi, here consisting of a cola-tree where they passed the night. If the bamayaala found the chalk when they went to look for it, they knew that the ntinu would have a long life.

NAMENTA and his followers then went once more to Mbanza Sundi to take possession of it and build the main residence. His friends then danced for two days, and on the third day NAMENTA was to be marked with the chalk, i.e. crowned. MPANZU took the chalk from the kiyaaazi and marked NAMENTA about the ears with it and then let him tramp on the leopard-skin. When he was about to step on the skin he first took aim twice with his foot in order to show respect for the leopard, while salvoes were fired. The third time he stepped on its head in order to reign over the leopards, so that they should not kill the domestic animals in the villages. When NAMENTA was about to tramp on the leopard the bamayaala held him by the finger-tip. The bamayaala and his other friends stood at the head of the leopard, while those who had lost the fight stood at the tail. When he then cleared his throat all sat down with crossed legs and showed the fear they felt for the leopard. They then placed a rod over NAMENTA's shoulders, set a

¹ For Mpanzu is nkazi a nsi, the wife-mvila of the country, the first to crown a ntinu and let him tramp on the leopard-skin. It was therefore his right to levy this tax upon the Sundi.

leopard-skin diadem on his brow, a necklace of leopard's teeth round his neck, a plaited cap (mpu) on his head and a loin-cloth about his loins. At first this was of nsangu-bark which was just prepared for chiefs; it was later replaced with native raphia bast-cloth and other cloths (fig. 14).

Finally, a spokesman for the bamayaala said: "Ntinu has tramped on the leopard-skin!" and the people dispersed. When NAMENTA returned to the royal court from the investiture he was met there by a woman who was designated nakazi or nkama (queen) and who was a free-born woman belonging to the Kimpanzu. She must belong to this mvila, but other wives might come from any mvila at all. When the ntinu was on a journey with his retinue and spied a beautiful woman he might touch her with his staff and she would become his wife whether she was married or not. No one might object. The ntinu himself could not beget children, so this was done by a younger brother with a mild disposition who tapped his palm-wine and lived with him. This, however, was a secret which might not be revealed, for then the brother might be executed (fig. 15).

If a regent of the Nanga was to be crowned he was often appointed immediately after the burial of his deceased predecessor. He could only be chosen from three zinzo. Only one who was known for his good character and a mild disposition, who was popular with most of the members of his own kanda and other makanda had any prospect of being chosen. When the funeral feast of the deceased predecessor was over the people sent for the banganga who were to let the intended regent step onto the leopard-skin and nkuwu-mat to be crowned. The latter then sent the edict of his coronation to the heads of other makanda. Each kanda sent its chief together with the required coronation-tax, consisting of about nine of each kind of domestic animal or whatever might be otherwise stipulated. This tax was to be paid to the banganga, their children and grandchildren.

When this had been done it was decreed that for nine nsona-days no one might sleep in a bed; everyone had to pull down his bed and sleep on the ground. Not even the pretender to the throne might lie in a bed; if he did so he would be immediately executed. At the end of the nine days he went to Mbanza Ngombe to be crowned by the banganga. In the Kinzau Valley he had to stay and sleep on the ground with his spouse for four nsona-days, but they were not allowed to have intercourse with each other.

Then came the banganga to conduct him with all haste up the mountain on which the town of Ngombe is situated. A broad road up the mountain has been made, and two small huts erected, one in the middle of the village and one of the masisya-plant at the spring where the people go to bathe. Children and grandchildren would be waiting at the roadside to strike the pretender to the throne and his spouse with twigs (nzangila) as they were conducted into the hut in the middle of the village where the bamayaala had already prepared the bed in which they were to lie. The wife immediately became pregnant, but the husband was unable to beget any more children (fwa nima).

After this they had to proceed to the hut at the spring to be licked by the leopard. The successor to the throne was then dedicated to the (mbende-rat), zunga mbende

which was able to produce leprosy in Mbanza Nkoki. He might then return to his town Mpelo, and grandchildren and bamayaala led him to his luumbu (enclosure) with joyfulness and with stamping. The paramount chief himself had to speak and stamp. When he stamped at the spring the water became agitated in the middle of the dry season. He was now a mbyazi (crowned regent) who had to make his laws and regulations.

The regalia of the Nanga consist of a staff (nkawa), a drinking bowl wrapped with leopard-skin and parrot-feathers (tenga), an arm-ring inherited from previous regents, a spear, a leopard-skin, nkuwu-mats and two large shells from which the paramount chief drinks his medicine. A mbyazi of the Nanga must before his accession to power have made a nkisi Lemba or nkisi Nsonde. The paramount chief of the Nanga may not die a natural death, but is strangled just before his decease and the corpse flung in a ravine. They say that he has bulama (been lost), benduka (gone down like the sun) or singama (died).

On the south side of the Congo, at Mukimbungu, the man who is to be crowned among the Navunda must first go to Tadi dya ngo (the leopard grotto) to communicate with the spirits that are there and that once exercised their sway over the country over which the paramount chief is to rule. He must say: "I shall receive the chieftainship and sit on the nkuwu-mat, leopard-skin and iron chest. Give me therefore happiness in my days, that I may become strong, great and powerful." If he falls ill on that day, then everybody understands that he cannot be crowned. He is probably not of pure royal blood; perhaps he or one of his forefathers had unwittingly had intercourse with a member of the same kanda. He must therefore receive the punishment for this great crime at the grotto, for his mother's sin becomes evident through his body.

Others are punished in another way. When they enter the grotto to be acknowledged by the deceased they are seized and never come out. The cause may be the same as that given above, it may be a result of the evil deeds committed by the pretender to the throne or be due to the fact that the people have not paid the required coronation-tax to the members of the kanda. The mistake may also be that the pretender to the throne will not give the traditional feast for the hundreds of kanda-chiefs who come to look on when Navunda is to be crowned. The spirits in the grotto then consider that he wants to take the chieftainship by force and for nothing, and he is therefore no more seen. Sometimes, too, it happens that the nsala (soul) of the pretender to the throne is not whole. A bit is missing, and for this reason he cannot emerge from the grotto again. If he does not come out the people go home in sorrow, and a long time elapses before another person is crowned. This will then be the child who grows up in the royal house according to the native custom.

The one who is finally consecrated must send a communication to this effect to all members of his kanda and to all the surrounding tract. When they get to the grotto the pretender to the throne must enter, and the chiefs who with their retinues have accompanied him stand outside with drums and dance and sing. When the aspirant to the

throne comes out, the deceased in the grotto have covered his body with chalk and with red and yellow ochre. The leopard has licked his arms and legs. At his appearance the crowd jubilates and salvoes are fired. When he has gone in and come out again three times the episode at the grotto is concluded, for the deceased have confirmed his election and anointed him with chalk and with red and yellow ochre.

The final act takes place on the plain, where, sitting on a leopard's tooth, a nkuwumat and an iron chest, he is given a necklace of leopard's teeth and a cap with red parrot-feathers to wear. On both forearms he wears rings of ivory. He wears these signs of dignity so that the people shall feel the same fear of and respect for him as for the leopard and the elephant. The iron chest (nsabi) may be replaced by a number of old flintlocks placed one on top of the other. One who cannot procure a nsabi cannot be crowned. In the morning the children and grandchildren knock on the chest, and all the water in the vicinity is then agitated by simbi-spirits and becomes turbid. One who has not already fetched water cannot get any that day.

The grotto where Navunda undergoes his trial is called Tadi Katewa sakuba (The Grotto Where One May Not Stumble). It is sacred, as a Navunda chief has successfully undergone his trial there. If any free-born member of the Navunda should stub his toe in the grotto he gets a sore that never heals. If anyone falls there and scrapes himself the abrasion proves equally lasting. For this reason free-born Navunda should pass the grotto slowly and not stamp or disturb those who live there, for they will severely punish the delinquent.

If, formerly, anyone threw a dead dog into the grotto, it would be found the following morning in the village square, marked with chalk and red ochre by the simbi-spirits. If the dog was taken to the grotto again it was returned; and this was repeated until it was thrown away elsewhere. Navunda's children and grandchildren marked themselves in the morning with red ochre and went to Tadi Katewa sakuba to pronounce invocations. There is also a body of water (zinga) which is holy because a Navunda was consecrated there. All who enter this water sink to the bottom and drown. When, for example, the wine-tapper WAMBA was taking a short cut over the pool of water and reached the middle he sank with his climbing loop and calabash. The same thing happened to a man and a woman who crossed the pool to cut palm-nuts on the other side. The water was given the name Kisaala, as they had both remained (saala) there.

Of the Navunda two mbyazi-chiefs have ruled; a third was to have been crowned, but died suddenly before the coronation act. The latter, whose name was NANKUNKU, was very carefully watched. He was only permitted to make water in his house, and for this reason the whole kanda took calabashes there for him to urinate in. His spouse, who was not otherwise permitted to work, then threw out the urine. The children and grandchildren used to carry her out in the sun and set her on a mat.

The investiture of a paramount chief was accomplished through a nkisi nsi (government-nkisi). In Bwende and other tracts also other minkisi had to be made; one such combatted leprosy. This consisted of a shell, a lukobe-box and a bundle of bumba. All

who had contracted leprosy were marked with the chalk in the shell. In the lukobe-box were kept, apart from chalk, also grasshoppers, lizards and snakes' heads etc., which were also used for rubbing on the sufferers. The bumba-bundle likewise contained chalk and certain medicines for the treatment of leprosy. It is not the paramount chief, but his children who make the leprosy-nkisi, and this must be done at a marsh; and the people are of course forbidden to go to this or to similar bodies of water. If there is no marsh in the vicinity, a nganga may select any spot at all, where he will dig a pit which is then filled with water. The nkisi must be made at a marsh so that the leper may bathe there daily and get well. It is made of bits of the purple-red grasshopper and other grasshoppers, snakes such as the mboma, mpidi, mandombe, babimbanzya, makanza and lukukutu, lizards and the bones of leopards etc. The snakes are to sting the one who has been brought by the paramount chief's children to the nkisi to get well. The grasshoppers are to punish the people and eat up the women's harvest. When a nganga dies, the lid of the lukobe-box is lifted and swarms of grasshoppers come out and descend on the whole country. The wages for a nganga among the Sundi who has made a nkisi nsi is a pig, a goat and ten hens.

When the nkisi is ready at the marsh the nganga holds one arm of the aspirant to the throne and makes him tramp on the leopard-skin. At the same time he declares that a paramount chief may never eat the mbende-rat, the nkabi-antelope or the goat, or he will contract leprosy. After this the signs of dignity are handed over. The leopard-skin must be kept by the paramount chief's children. If it is desecrated in any way a leopard will come into the village and take a pig. The mbyazi-chief must protect and help his children, for his dignity resides in this skin. If he refuses the children his help he may be afflicted with leprosy.

Here, as elsewhere among the Sundi, the sacred nsanda rubber-tree is a kiyaazi (royal sign of dignity). No one may break off a leaf from the nsanda-tree, nor may it be wounded with a knife. In the latter case the tree will become impure and it will cost a pig to purify it. When a nsanda-tree is planted a medicine is first placed in the bottom of the hole. This is the kindakazi (nkinda-magic) of the chieftainship.

Such a paramount chief may not be mourned when he dies. The women must laugh and the men make bands to carry the corpse with and dance. The corpse must be carried close to the ground; if it is carried or lifted high, leprosy will come.

In the Bwende tract mbyazi-chiefs may also be chosen and crowned without bweno. This is done by the baana ba mbuta (the children who are born in his village) when their chief has died and is to be shrouded and buried. They then assemble his younger brothers and chose one of them as the regent of the Bwende. The latter is captured by the baana ba mbuta and taken into the house in which the corpse of the paramount chief is reposing. He is placed in the lap of the corpse so that he is leaning over the deceased. They now mark the newly appointed chief with chalk and yellow ochre and sing the song: "You have seen the leopard, the spotty one, a dangerous animal."

They then take him on their backs and carry him to his house. The elected man may

now not wander about freely but must remain indoors until the konzo-day on which the investiture takes place, and during this period no one may touch a tool or work. The future paramount chief is placed in the lap of the nyombo-corpse in order to show that the latter no longer has any power, for the one who sits there is the most powerful. According to another procedure, the deceased, "the corpse of power", is borne to the grave and set down at its edge. The chosen successor then steps over the corpse three times, after which he is lifted up and carried home. In no circumstances may he look behind him. The successor must then remain in his dwelling until the nsona-day on which the coronation takes place. His grandchildren prepare a medicine-bag which neither he nor his kanda are allowed to see, and which may only be used by the baana ba mbuta. The bag is opened after the ceremony, but only if the paramount chief becomes ill, for he must then be treated with it.

When the people have assembled for the coronation his baana ba mbuta carry him out and set him on five or six guns which have been covered with a leopard-skin. He is then given his staff, his climbing loop, his knife and palm-leaf cutlass. Everything there is in the country is brought together to dress him in or to let him touch. Nothing must be omitted. When this part of the proceedings is over he is marked with chalk and yellow ochre in rings on his body like the spots of the leopard; and now, throughout the coronation, they sing: "Eh, Ngangula (skilful in smithing), you have been crowned, you have been blessed. Eh, Ngangula, should you forget the prohibitions, do you see them, Ngangula?"

After this the whole body is marked from the navel to the chin, and the paramount chief clears his throat. Those who are crowning him also clear their throats (to symbolize the drinking of palm-wine) and say: "You paramount chief over the Bwende of Ntudi, may you heap up (tudika) hundreds of makanda. It is you, Nyumbu ntende, who brings forth palms; if you do not do so, there are no palms. It is you who gives us the beautiful humans. You, Mpanzu deeka, has illumined the whole country, you dangerous animal, that goes forth on the roads. You Bwende are not a wearer of dog's teeth but of a necklace of lion's and leopard's teeth."

The paramount chief is then taken home to his house, and he may not visit the market until he has been shown there. He is not permitted to go any distance away, though he may do odd work like tapping palm-wine or the like. After the coronation the feast continues with palm-wine and dancing, and those who have come to the ceremony receive presents of pigs etc. When the elected paramount chief is taken by his baana ba mbuta he is first called Ninswami (the Concealed One), since he may not yet show himself to the people.

A part of the coronation ceremonies may also go forward at the burial place of the deceased regents, whither the elected man is then carried in a great procession along a broad road hacked for the purpose. As the procession approaches the dynastic burial place all the people fall on their knees, in which manner they then proceed. Those who are carrying the chief, however, walk erect. When they have arrived at the place palm-

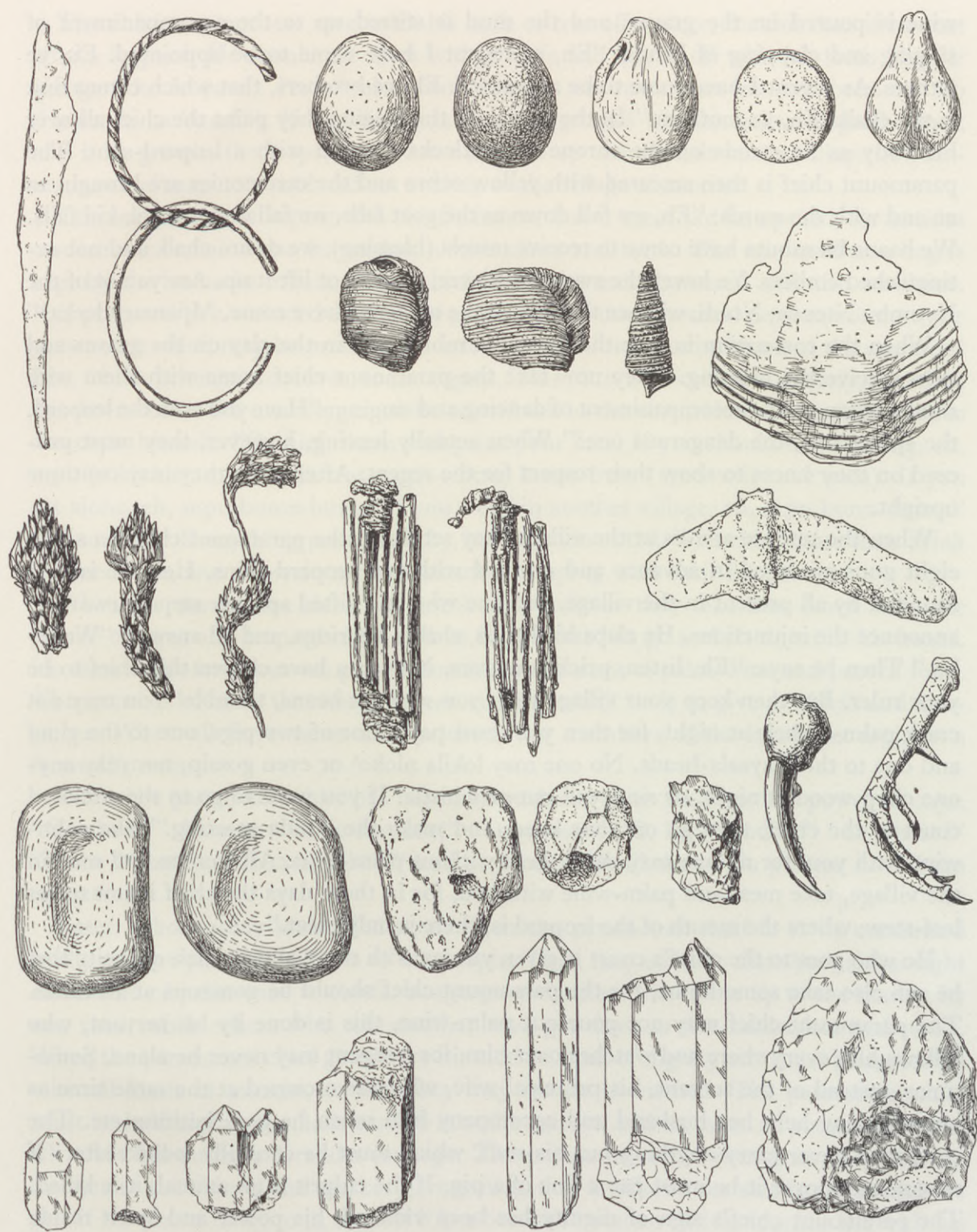


Fig. 38. Contents of nkisi Nkita Nsumbu (cf. fig. 35: a, Laman 1357).

wine is poured on the graves, and the mud is stirred up to the accompaniment of singing and clapping of hands: "Eh, as regent I have come to be appointed. Eh, ye fathers. As regent I have come to be appointed. Eh, ye brothers, that which comes first is the chalk. Eh, ye mothers." In the course of the singing they paint the chief all over his body as he stands on the throne of flintlocks covered with a leopard-skin. The paramount chief is then smeared with yellow ochre and the ceremonies are brought to an end with the words: "Eh, we fall down as the goat falls, we fall down as the kid falls. We baana ba mbuta have come to receive mwela (blessing), we desire chalk and not extinguished embers. Ye lower the sword of power, we do not lift it up. Are ye not of the Nyumbu Ntenda, Ntudi, whence the men of the makanda have come, Mpanzu adeeka?"

When the coronation is over the baana ba mbuta roll in the clay on the graves and then receive the blessing. They now take the paramount chief home with them with shouts of joy, to the accompaniment of dancing and singing: "Have you seen the leopard, the spotty one, the dangerous one?" When actually leaving, however, they must proceed on their knees to show their respect for the regent. Afterwards they may continue upright.

When the retinue arrives at the village they set down the paramount chief on six to eight guns arranged in advance and covered with two leopard-skins. Here he is surrounded by all present in the village, and one who is a gifted speaker steps forward to announce the injunctions. He claps his hands, shakes his rings, and all answer: "Wahoho." Then he says: "Eh, listen, prick your ears. Now you have chosen this chief to be your ruler. But then keep your village well, you who eat beans, tremble! You may not crack palm-kernels at night, for then you must pay a fine of two pigs, one to the chief and one to the mayaala-heads. No one may lokila nloko¹ or even gossip, nor may anyone chop wood at night, or sing, call out or whistle. If you want to go to the enclosed court of the chief, then go on your knees and make the kunda-greeting. Take palm-wine with you, for no one may enter there without palm-wine. All women and men in the village, take meat and palm-wine with you, for in these days the chief is not to eat leaf-stew; where the mouth of the leopard is, there is only meat."

He who goes to the chief's court is given yuuma with meat, and in such quantity that he can also take some home, for the paramount chief should be generous at all times. The paramount chief may not pour out palm-wine, this is done by his servant, who follows him everywhere and watches over him, for a regent may never be alone. Sometimes, instead of the servant, his principal wife, who was crowned at the same time as himself, may help her husband and accompany him when he goes bathing etc. The chief may never carry anything but his staff, which must be carefully looked after. If anyone steps over it he must pay a fine of a pig. If the culprit is an animal, it is killed. The paramount chief's sign of dignity has been violated; his power and spirit reside in the staff. No one may touch it, carry it or strike the ground with it, for then he has thrown his paramount chief to the ground. When the chief drinks, none may speak.

¹ Bewitch, avenge oneself by means of witchcraft or a curse.

The chief may not tear meat with his nails or tear off a piece, for this is as if he sent after a leopard. He should eat meat with a knife and bite it off with his teeth like Sir Nango (the leopard). He should absolutely not eat meat that has not been cut up ("meat in its blood"). If the chief scratches the ground with his nails a leopard comes; and if he growls, the leopard will come and eat up the animals in the village. A paramount chief may not stand and eat or sleep in the village of another.

The lukobe-box is kept in the chief's house, but it must not be opened, for besides medicine it contains also leopard-skin with claws and teeth. The salu-medicine bag is kept by the baana ba mbuta. If the chief falls ill he must be cured with this medicine. It is prepared in a secluded spot in the grass, and no unauthorized person, not even the paramount chief, may be present. An essential constituent is the blood of the sacrificed hen, which belongs, moreover, to the regent. This must be received very early, for when the dawn comes the medicine must be taken back to the chief. He is admonished not to desecrate himself. "O chief, listen and prick your ears. If you should eat standing, eh, mpu (a kinkisi, a caterpillar or earth-worm) buma-buma (you will have pain). If you eat alone, eh, mpu buma-buma. If you sleep in another village, eh, mpu buma-buma" and so forth. Everything prescribed by law is enumerated. The chief must then drink the medicine, and all perform the makunku-clapping with their hands.

When the paramount chief has drunk the medicine they take him down from the throne of guns and leopard-skins and he is permitted to go and sit down in his house. He then sends for about ten pigs, a hundred calabashes of palm-wine and pots of food. This consists of meat that has not been cut up, which he is to give to chiefs and banganga. When all have eaten and belched, the members of the kanda get a pig as a farewell present.

When the paramount chief has been crowned and taken the sword of power he says: "O, whose?" Answer: "O, he Bwende!" "O, whose?" "O, he Nsundi-e!" "O, whose?" "O, he Ndamba, Mbenza, Nlasa!" and so forth until all the tuvila present have been enumerated.

Later, a konzo-day is decided upon when the paramount chief is to be conducted to the market-place and shown to the people. Then they come to distribute six to eight calabashes of palm-wine to chiefs, banganga and others who come up to the market by one road, while others who take another road get three to five calabashes and so on. When the paramount chief goes there his clothes, staff of dignity etc. must be protected with all kinds of minkisi, so that they may not be bewitched. The paramount chief must be held aloft when he is carried into the market, and be taken all round the same. All must fall down and render homage. The paramount chief then goes and takes up his seat at the side of the market. Everything that is offered for sale in the market he gets if he takes a fancy to it. Even if it is a beautiful woman and he touches her with his staff, she becomes one of his wives. The market-law, which is already known, is proclaimed once more.

These paramount chiefs are called mbyazi, which implies that they are elected and

crowned by their children and grandchildren or by the baana ba mbuta of their kanda. Yaazi, kiyaazi is both the place where the paramount chief lives and the place where he is consecrated; it is, however, also the bag with chalk, the nsanda-tree and the like. The chiefdom and the dignity are called kimbyazi. Means of protection connected with kiyaazi are called nkinda kiyaazi, kindakazi or nkinda bweno, because the nkinda (amulets) has come from bweno. The nkinda protective power exists in the animals from which the paramount chief has received the kinkonko-soul, and in the nsanda-rubber tree which is on the occasion of the coronation ceremony planted in the enclosed court and is a dynastic sign of dignity. The place in Bwende where NAKYANGALA or NABWENDE was crowned is called Ntu a matundulu, for when the coronation was over and the leopard-skin had been rolled up and put down in the house a widely branching sadi-potato had grown there, and this became their kindakazi. The place is honoured to this day and may not be trespassed upon by the children of the mvila, though the chief's children and grandchildren may go there.

The mbyazi-regents rules over all the country where they had been appointed, but also over the big markets, as for example at Manyanga, Mpika Seese and Tsaba etc. in the French region, where thousands of persons could assemble.

From the material I have from my contributors from Mayombe and the tracts thereabout it appears that there were higher and lower bwene (provinces) with different designations, customs and usages. Bwene, wene has the abstract significance of mwene, mwe (master) in addressing those to whom one wishes to show respect, and thus also to the minkisi, as is apparent when these are invoked. The bwene-dignity is greater than the ordinary mfumu-dignity, for one must be crowned for the former. With it is also associated a religious power through the nkisi nsi. It may also refer to the forest (wa mfinda) or the village (wa bwala), if the objects connected with the nkisi nsi are placed in the forest or the village.

Nkisi and nkisi nsi do not correspond to what is now connoted by nkisi, but to what higher up-country is called kiyaazi (from yaala, to rule), thus a power of religious character that is needed to strengthen the authority of the regent. These kiyaazi-objects, however, might also become ordinary minkisi with different names. Among the sacred objects that constituted nkisi nsi in Mayombe might be noted the mbalala-tree, of whose wood was made the finely carved chief's staff, for which nine slaves or more were paid. The tree was planted at the coronation or burial site. To the same category belonged also the nkondo-tree (baobab), the nsanda-tree, the ndemba-ndemba-tree and the creepers moobula and mungele-ngenze. Weapons, tools, gongs etc. and bikinda (means of protection) were also used. The baobab-tree and the nsanda rubber tree symbolize the paramount chief's power and strength, while the ndemba-ndemba are used as pillars, and the creepers say, as it were: "May he grow and spread out as we do. May he beget Mbenza-chiefs, Makunga-chiefs, bamfumu and banganga."

At the coronation it is customary to place a piece of a palm, a banana, a nsafu-tree, a cola-nut tree and manioc etc. beside nkisi nsi to remind the regent of the children's

rights in relation to the father. They should be permitted, according to the tradition, to tap palm-wine, take bananas, nsafu, manioc and the like as before, without being blamed or shown any ill-feeling. Other things that are placed there are a bit of the lemba-lemba and the munsanga plants. If the paramount chief gets very angry he must drink of the first-mentioned of these, so that what he had intended to say may come "below the navel and not above it". The last-mentioned is supposed to give him strength to put a stop to all fighting in the village. When he comes with nsangu lavu wound round his finger all say: "ngo, ngo, ngo (leopard)" and listen in silence to what he has to say. In the same way they place there a piece of the munsabi-nsabi and mundudi-ndudi trees. In the former case evil designs are averted if the paramount chief says "nsabi-nsabi", while in the latter case bandoki and other spiteful persons are thwarted in their activities because it is so terribly bitter in the mouth and spittle (mundudi-ndudi, wormwood).

The highest bwene-dignity in Mayombe is called kimbenza or baluka divungu (to ascend the divungu-throne). Next in order are kimakunga and nsanda. Of these there is also a lower degree which is referred to as kayi of Mbanza and kayi of Mahunga or Nsanda. Kayi-chiefs are called bundukuswa (united), i.e. small chiefs under others. These are sometimes appointed by election, while the higher chiefs owe their office to their wealth. The kayi-chiefs may, however, amass such wealth that they are promoted to higher rank when they can pay the fees required for their investiture to the chiefs. They are given the same burial as a paramount chief provided that they are able to pay for the burial feast. The most important paramount chiefs are given the title ntinu, while others are called mfumu. A ntinu's greatness is apparent from the burial accorded him. He is not allowed to die a natural death, and one of the grandchildren must put a noose round his neck and put the loose end of the cord through a hole in the wall, after which the ntinu is strangled if it is found that he is going to die. The body is buried in washed mud, and the entrails of a goat and a pig are placed in the coffin. Those who rule as a kimbenza are drawn in waggons to the burial place, where a great feast is held. Other chiefs, again, may not be drawn in waggons but must be carried to the grave. And if it is really desired to honour a deceased chief he is buried as a paramount chief.

In Mayombe the paramount chiefs are buried in a sequestered spot in the forest which is called Lulombe. If the wife of a ntinu of Mansundi dies, a special period of mourning is decreed through the bandunga. Also in Kibunzi the paramount chief was formerly called ntinu, and the lower crowned chiefs mbyazi. Other elected chiefs were given the title makayi, as for example makayi at Kibunzi, who was living there when the Swedish mission arrived. The chiefs are buried with the pomp that each kanda can afford. In Bwende the paramount chiefs are buried on the plain Mbamba. In northern Bwende the paramount chief has the title bweno, which is doubtless connected with bwene and is perhaps the original title, if one considers the traditions concerning the origin of nkisi Bweno. In Bwende and farther up-country the paramount chief is also given the title mpu (power, dignity).

Among the regalia may be noted in Mayombe *munkwisa* (a very acid, juicy and luxuriant plant), in which resides the chief's *lunzi* (soul). The *munkwisa* is covered with leopard's claws and skin with hair from the leopard's brow. From its root is made a *kiyaazi* (*nkisi a luyaalu*) for Mbenza's province; it is called *Mwema Lusunzi*. *Lubukulu* from the forest consists of *nkobe a luyaalu*.¹ This *Mwema Lusunzi* is so celebrated that its name has also been made the name of a district which is locally considered finer than Kimbenza. *MWEMA LUSUNZI* was not allowed to cross the Congo, and the same rule applied also to all the regents succeeding him. None of them might be buried in his own country, and the corpse, after the removal and burial of the entrails, had to be carried night after night to the country where it was to be buried. Characteristic for this dynasty was that their *ndungu*-drum went out into the courtyard itself in order to be heard far and wide. Besides this new kingdom, one was also founded in the Kunyi country in Mayombe, and the first to ascend the kunyi throne was *MAKUNYI NSILA*.

Among other regalia may be noted the *dikooko* (a weapon), which every regent had to have forged. This is placed in the court during lawsuits. Certain skins are also signs of dignity, above all that of the *kinkonda* monkey, which represents great toughness, for the animal can stand tremendous suffering without dying. Necklaces of elephant's teeth are a symbol for strength; and the tuft of the buffalo's tail (*mfunka*) used in lawsuits and a large, finely carved staff (*mwala*) with two ornaments resembling *makumba*-tomatoes are other signs of dignity (fig. 7: b).

Most important of all, however, is the leopard-skin on which the chief is crowned, the necklace of leopard's teeth and the chief's cap with pendant tassel (*bandi*), which is sewn on the bank of the Kongo *dya Ntotila*. The leopard with its skin, its teeth and claws and if possible also a lion's claw, these are the symbols of the regent's full power. "The regent is a leopard. Where the regent speaks, there speak the leopard, the lion. The leopard is king and the paramount chief his fellow-king." At a lawsuit, the people sometimes call out: "A lion's mouth, not a leopard's mouth is our *mwene* (master)." Higher up-country also a kind of headgear stuck with parrot's feathers is used as a sign of dignity, for the parrot represents slyness and loquacity. Also many other objects are used by the chiefs as signs of dignity. Nor infrequently the chief's office is associated with objects which represent *bisimbi*. These are sometimes curious trees, but above all caves and bodies of water where some member of the *kanda* has lost his life.

Women were also entitled to a *bwene*-throne with its dignity if they paid the required tax to the chiefs. *MBENZA MAKELE* was such a woman. Apart from the tax she had to pay six human beings and a bundle of cloth for *lubukulu*, *munkwisa* and *mwala*. For *MWEMA LUSUNZI* it cost twelve human beings for the right to ascend the *bwene*-throne, while *KAYI* needed only to pay six and *KINWELA* two.

Concerning many of these chiefs remarkable things are related. Some became powerful *banganga* on whose death great miracles took place. One, *MASWA NGOMA*, snatched

¹ *Lubukulu* is a government *nkisi* which is also called *nkobe a luyalu*.

away his soul and hid his life in a couple of shells, so that he lived for an incredibly long time. The bandoki could not find him. After MASWA NGOMA's death signs were observed in his grave, in water and in the sky. The rain fell, the wind howled and he went away to the sea, into which a meteor fell with a great noise. The heavens thundered and roared. He was only one day in the grave.

A paramount chief has to observe many prohibitions. He may not let his munkwisa fall on the ground, for if it falls from his loins the chief may not lift his feet until someone has picked it up. Otherwise he will die. But the paramount chief must then procure a new munkwisa, pay a human being as a forfeit and go through all the coronation ceremonies again, tramp on the leopard-skin, come from the mbalala-tree and sleep for nine nsona-days in his house in order to be crowned again by being marked with chalk nine times a day. No one may tramp on a regent's foot. He may not eat goat's meat (a nkisi prohibition), and before a paramount chief eats he should chalk himself on the ears. If he is to be carried, this must be done by his grandchildren and the slaves. In the village where he alights, the village-chief must give "a reception from the mat". If the paramount chief jumps (dumuka), all those present must likewise jump, so that the sound may be heard far and wide. The paramount chief may not lend his signs of dignity, and no member of his kanda or mvila may touch them or nkisi nsi except his children and grandchildren. Similarly, the burial place of the paramount chief may only be visited by his children and grandchildren, who must also keep nkisi nsi. The deceased paramount chief's bandi-cap may not be worn by the successor until the latter has been consecrated.

One of the rules regarding the bwene-chief is that if a grandchild sits on the regent's mat or chair in his court the culprit must pay a heavy fine or be executed. Through his action he has forced the regent to die, since the one who has sat on the mat is to be the chief's successor in the district. When a woman puts down wood, she must do this gently and quietly, as otherwise the regent's belly will swell. For the same reason no one may throw anything hard on the ground or strike the ground hard. If the regent's wife is bathing, no one must see her naked or put his feet in the water where she is bathing, for he may then be sentenced to execution. The same applies to a meeting in the forest, in which case the man must go to one side.

With the inception of the modern era, when trade from the coast became livelier, the natives established another regency. The chiefs appointed were called mfumu a Lulendo (the masters of power) or mfumu a Nkondo (master of injunctions, of the law), for they were to be responsible for security and peace at the big newly established markets and on the roads leading to these on the days on which the markets were held. This authority, too, was placed on a religious basis, viz, on a nkisi named Lulendo (power) or Nkondo (injunction, law), and the chiefs in question were appointed after instructions which the banganga received from the south and up through the country into the French territory. The market-chief was thus a guardian of law and order for trade. Anyone who contravened the law was punished, in the worst case by being

buried alive at the market-place. Nkisi Lulendo is sometimes derived from bweni or bwene.

A lulendo or nkondo chief had a beautifully carved chief's staff whose end and middle were ornamented with inlaid rings of a riddle-barrel (mandaka) and also embellished with figures of lead or iron. Among other signs of dignity might be noted the chief's sword and some smaller knives in a nkisi-bag. These were called Lulendo's small knives or small swords (fig. 15, 27).

Mfumu a Lulendo's right-hand men are called mayaala ma Nkondo (who are guardians of the law). The name of the chief's wife is mabundama ma Nkondo (to unite, lay together). She is thus named because she must sit with crossed (bundama) legs and may not have them stretched out as long as her husband is conducting a lawsuit. If she has her legs stretched out the suit will be too protracted and violent. This applies in case of war and other complications that the chief must settle. At the appointment of mfumu a Lulendo or Nkondo are needed first a leopard-skin, two or three leopard's teeth and a quantity of goods, e.g. one hundred pieces of cloth or a human being. The paramount nganga is called mbeeke Lulendo (Lulendo's sword), nganga Lulendo or namfumu. Among the prohibitions imposed on the chief may be noted that he may not drink palm-wine otherwise than from spread-out banana-leaves, and in this connection he must first pour out a little wine on the ground, put earth under his feet and give some to the nganga to smear on his neck. When the paramount chief is drinking, no one may speak, and where he is advancing none may sit with stretched out legs or with the knees drawn up.

Sometimes a chief may be elected by a mbyazi-chief and the people of the district. The first-mentioned assembles the people and asks: "Whom do you want me to consecrate as chief?" They then choose one who is generous and rich. When he has been appointed by the people, the mbyazi-chief must have six raphia-cloths spread out on the ground, whereupon the new chief steps on to these opposite the mbyazi-chief. The latter tramps on the toes of the newly appointed chief, takes chalk from the tin and begins to draw on himself from the heart, at the navel and on the legs down to the big toe, whence he continues in the reverse order over the toes of the new chief up to his heart. He also chalks from the wrists and arms to the heart again. When the mbyazi-chief has finished chalking, all cry out: "Wolo-wolo. Eh, our chief has been appointed as mbyazi." To the chief they say: "Now quit your miserliness, love the young (zintaudi), love your people, preserve all in your kanda, receive strangers (traders), help those who are involved in lawsuits or other difficulties and so forth." This is then followed by dancing, during which salvoes are fired and other festivities indulged in.

To attain mbenza-dignity used to cost a great deal. Each of the small chiefs of the tract was to receive a bundle of cloth and one or two pigs. At the consecration the small chieftainships were united in a government-nkisi and the consecrated man was accorded the dignity with the title kayi, makayi or kimakunga. Such a chief had great power. He might not eat nkasa and it was not allowed to arrange for the smelling out

of bandoki or to give others poison on his decease. During their regency they had all who had been condemned to death executed and set up their skulls on the enclosure to their courts.

If the kimbenza-dignity was very great, a tremendously high price might be required when the appointed person was ready to go to Lafi to receive the coronation-ring. The price might amount to as much as thirty human beings as well as goats, pigs, ducks, hens and palm-wine. After this they might ask for seven human beings, seven bundles of cloth, seven pigs, goats, sheep, ducks, dogs and cats and seven mugs, seven pieces of cloth and seven armfuls of lenda-cloth and so on. Not until this was paid was the kimbenza-chief crowned or did he have the ring put on his finger to become the paramount chief of all chiefs. A paramount chief's power thus lay in the wealth that his brothers, relatives and slaves were able to muster for the inauguration. After his authority of power he ruled and maintained the traditions and laws of his country. He himself enjoyed great privileges. Wherever he saw a beautiful woman and touched her shoulder with his staff she became his spouse in the enclosed court, whether she had formerly been married or not. If he saw a fine big pig or heard a cock crow he might send for them. If he heard a drum whose sound pleased him he might take it. He might, indeed, appropriate whatever he fancied.

The regent was honoured in many ways. When the ntinu was addressed the speaker had first to yobila tobe (i.e. fall down and rub the sides of his hands on the ground with the little fingers downwards, then strike his temples three times and clap his hands). When answering, the person spoken to had to say "Nzambi". If the chief had died or was for some reason no longer ruling, no one might answer nzambi. If a ntinu was asked a question by a mayaala, he had first to clap his hands and ask: "Is there peace in luumbu (the enclosure)?" A ntinu may visit other ntinu, but not the market or any lawsuits. He must have a large retinue and a gong to strike, so that the people in the villages shall know that a ntinu is passing. All must then fall on their knees, and the children must conceal themselves in the houses or in the grass.

Those who bear the name mayaala (one or more of his younger brothers in the capacity of advisers) and mavitu (one who watches over and guards a ntinu) must follow the regent. If the people wish to ask anything they must go to a mavitu and announce it; the latter tells a mayaala, who in his turn puts the question to the regent. If he approves the errand he shakes the little rings on his arms and the people clap their hands. Other more important business is presented in the same way, and the regent decides the matter as a chief justice. If a war has broken out on the plain, the ntinu takes his staff, goes to the place and says: "O, hear me!" Hostilities then cease at once. Everyone who then fires a shot is executed the following day.

No one may contradict the ntinu. His younger brothers may not keep their possessions in their own houses, but must keep them in the ntinu's dwelling. Otherwise, if the matter comes to his knowledge, they must pay a fine of a pig or a goat. Whatever the ntinu orders, must be obeyed. Those who are refractory he has put in the stocks

or the pillory, or even, in case of a severe offence, punished with death. Those who act as if they were ntinu are ordered by the latter to drink nkondi-manure, i.e. the dung of pigs, hens and goats dissolved in water, at the same time as they are to invoke nkisi Nkondi.

Many different customs are observed before ntinu and mbyazi chiefs. If, for example, a mbyazi is eating in his enclosure and someone wishes to meet him he must, on seeing what is taking place, be still and silent. When the chief has finished eating and looks at the visitor, the latter must go and fetch a bundle of mpusu-fibres in the chief's house and dry the chief's mouth and hands and wash his biyeeye arm-rings. The visitor asks no questions about the food, but takes some with him to his house and eats it there, afterwards returning the chief's pot and dish. Many of the old paramount chiefs became very rich. Thus one of them, for example, had an elephant's tusk as a bolt to his house, and the door-handle consisted of hairs from an elephant's tail. Many of them took with cunning and violence both goods and wives from others, on which account conflicts, even armed conflicts, might arise. Tradition has it that for this reason there broke out a great war against the ntinu Kongo dya Ntotila. The latter, however, gained the victory, and his opponents, NANGA NAKONGO, MBENZA NAKONGO and MBINDA NAKONGO, fled over to the north bank of the Congo. Here, as has already been described, they met with the same tuvila.

The paramount chiefs are supposed to see that the customs and usages of the country are respected. They are also anxious to punish severely those who in any way commit any trespass with their spouses in the chief's dwelling. One who murders another is executed, as is also a man who begins a war without the paramount chief's permission, or has coitus with a virgin before her puberty or with a woman on the bare ground. He is careful to see that the sanctity of the market and the market-roads is respected, for otherwise the market will disappear, and therewith his power and incomes. New laws are made in concert with the bamayaala and the people.

A woman might also ascend a divungu-throne and govern strongly; but NAKIMPESI BONDO of the Kinanga in the Tukula jungle was the last there, for when she was to be crowned she got her menstruation and became unclean, and was therefore not allowed to touch the sacred signs of dignity. She then said to her eldest son: "When we arrive at the village you must hold the chief and consecrate him." Elsewhere, however, women have not infrequently ruled right up to the present day.

Kanda and village chiefs are to be found everywhere. They are independent, and are not subject to any paramount chief unless they have joined others in appointing one, when according to agreement they become his lower co-regents. The kanda and village chiefs are not elected, they attain their position through their personal authority and their ability to manage the economic and political influence of the kanda. When such a chief dies the chieftainship is inherited by one whom the kanda regards as worthy of the office. A woman may of course be given the power if no one else is found capable. Such chieftainships are inherited in the man's kanda and not in his children's



Fig. 39. Contents of nkisi Nkita Niumbu (cf. fig. 35: b, Laman 1170).

kanda, i.e. that of the children's mother. If there are two makanda in a village there is generally also a chief for each; but if the one is considerably more prominent and influential than the other he may also be made chief for the whole village. He may as a matter of fact then become a paramount chief for two or three other villages without having been elected to this office. Such a chief should be not only economically and politically influential, but should also have a good and mild disposition, be generous and sociable.

The village and kanda chiefs thus actually ruled over their own kanda within an entirely local region. They were therefore always solicitous on behalf of their kanda and represented its interests against other makanda in any lawsuits which occurred. The rivalry between the village and kanda chiefs sometimes gave rise, however, to serious conflicts which might result in migrations unless some paramount chief with considerable authority could prevent this. Many of the village chiefs of former times are described as lazy and indifferent. They sat for the most part in the sun or warmed themselves at the fire, smoking or drinking palm-wine, killing flies, looking after the children and conducting lawsuits that occurred, grinding their teeth the while. It was also their business to receive strangers and traders.

The advisers of the village and kanda chief were to be found among the elders in the village and his own brothers. The chief was the head man of the kanda and in this capacity he managed all the kanda business to the best of his ability. He also kept up the old traditions and told the younger people of the former wars and lawsuits in which the kanda had been involved, so that on his decease they should be fully informed in these matters. Many of the more influential village chiefs used also to sit on a leopard-skin and have a staff and a leopard-tooth necklace as signs of dignity. Women could only be village chiefs over slaves and the wives of the head man, the oldest and most well-liked of these being chosen for the post.

In the Bwende country there was a kanda named Kimpombo, which was called a chief's kanda. This kanda was accorded such respect among the natives that wherever a Kimpombo settled he was appointed chief, as he was considered to possess a remarkable magic power. If anyone, even a child, omitted to say mfumu when addressing him, and pronounced only his name, he might be afflicted with a disease. If, on the other hand, the person in question humbled himself and scraped his knees on the ground, clapping his hands and saying: "I honour my master, another day I shall not do it again" the Kimpombo-chief would reply: "Eh, go away! Another day, if you do it again." Those who wanted to establish a new village thus wished to take with them a Kimpombo who was to be their chief. No one might contradict him. It was by winning a wager with the Kinanga as to who could withstand hunger longest that the Kimpombo gained their dignity as chiefs.

It was not a group of elders that functioned as the council or elective body, but the elders together with the chiefs and other influential members of the kanda took counsel together and decided all the matters of business that might arise. A ntinu or mbyazi

was as a rule appointed by his children and grandchildren, but always those from his own mother's kanda. The village and kanda chiefs were accorded their dignity in proportion to what might be considered their ability to promote the interests of the kanda. Here the so-called baleeke (the younger brothers of the chief and their peers) wielded great influence and constituted in a way a special group.

Among the inhabitants of the village the eldest and those called bakuluntu (older chiefs) or bambuta are considered to be among the most prominent, and from their circle are appointed councillors and not infrequently also chiefs. Each of these groups always strives to promote the interests of its own kanda, and if there are several makanda of the same mvila in the village there will be rivalry between them in several respects.

Most of the public meetings in a village are actually to decide lawsuits and punish the guilty parties according to law and custom. Those who preside on these occasions are the zinzonzi of both parties. In more recent times the ordeal by poison and other ordeals have played a prominent role. These are decided by the banganga. When the ntinu and mbyazi chiefs were appointed, when lawsuits and laws were proclaimed, the subordinate chiefs of villages and makanda together with their oldest banganga and zinzonzi were the spokesmen.

It was formerly rather common for villages belonging to different makanda to make peace treaties with each other. This was done especially if they had earlier waged a bitter war with each other and many lives had been lost. Feeling the loss of their relatives, representatives from both sides would meet to conclude peace. They would then often assemble on a hill, taking with them a big nkisi Nkondi in order before the latter to confirm the treaty on oath, each party hammering mabu (iron wedges) or a fyefye (knife) into Nkondi and firing salvoes.

The meeting began in all friendliness with drinking of palm-wine, the slaughtering of a goat and a common meal, after which the peace was decided and agreement was reached as to the punishments to be meted out for those who broke the treaty in the current and coming generations. They would then take something representing both parties together with a little hair and fasten this to Nkondi, kiss the wedge or the knife and hammer it into Nkondi, saying: "Now there has been a terrible wrath between us, if it is ended, come and swear rightly, let us leave all rightly. If not, let Nkondi come and eat us." Or: "Let us no more wrinkle our brows at each other. Let us no more take pledges of war from each other. Here everything shall have an end. We have acted badly. If we should become enemies again and I attack a son or daughter, Nkondi, what shall you do? Eat me!" Another says: "Behold, we and you, thus have we done. Should we once again show you the muzzles of guns? Should I come again to be revenged? Or if a stranger should come and alight at your house, should I take him in the night, in the day, Nkondi, what will you do? Eat me!" If the compact was broken Nkondi became unclean and was wrathful with the culprits, who had to slaughter a pig to "reestablish" Nkondi, i.e. to renew the peace. Between villages and makanda it

was also possible to conclude treaties in which support was promised in case of armed conflict, or agreements regarding marriage or penal regulations and fines in connection with lawsuits, to ensure that the punishments meted out should not be too severe. Every agreement was confirmed before a big nkisi.

Members of the same kanda may be received as guests in the village if they come from a long way off, provided that they belong to the same mvila. If they belong to another kanda and mvila they are received as bakwangi (protégés). The villagers then fire shots and dance with joy, since they have been lucky enough to keep one who is accounted as on a par with a slave or to receive goods in his stead. A well-disposed village chief may grant strangers belonging to another mvila permission to live in his village. But they must then buy land. The chief for the new settlers must then summon other chiefs to witness the purchase of land and palm grove or the conclusion of other agreements. At the reciprocal assurance that the agreement will be kept through the generations a piece of iron is struck into Nkondi. If discord nevertheless arises, a settlement must be made and the parties be reconciled.

It sometimes happens that a stranger is accepted as a member of the kanda, and this is confirmed by, *inter alia*, striking pieces of iron into Nkondi. In addition to this, a hen is sacrificed and the blood allowed to trickle on to the pieces. The new members are then given a piece of land on which to build. If distant relatives meet they may be received by their people and a pig is generally slaughtered to celebrate the occasion.

Adjacent villages live as a rule on terms of friendship with each other. The villagers exchange gifts from their crops as well as in the form of slaughtered animals or game etc. Agreements are made between such villages as to uniform fines. One way of confirming such agreements is to take an axe, each party grasping the handle in order jointly to make a deep cut in a tree, the parties then giving half a pig each to the witnesses. All such agreements are conducted by the nzonzi, the chiefs and their assistants, and the banganga, and are confirmed on oath before some nkisi.

Armed conflict generally arises between different villages and tuvila or makanda when one party as plaintiff does not consider that its claims and demands have been properly met, whether it is a matter of punishing a guilty person or repaying a debt. If a sister who has married into another village comes home weeping because she has been exposed to violence or insults, the brother may, if he is rich, summon his people to wage war on the brother-in-law. The causes may be of many kinds, such as e.g. unlawful acts against person and property. Thus a grass-fire set by a village that has burnt down one or several houses in another village may constitute a *casus belli*.

Frequently the chiefs may come to loggerheads when they are sitting and drinking palm-wine after a lawsuit. If one has a beard but not another, the former, for example, may insult the latter, which may lead to a conflict. Likewise one who has fine hounds may jeer at one who has none; and a chief who is the child or grandchild of a slave may have this cast in his teeth. But he may answer: "You are a leopard, I am a leopard (i.e. you are a chief and I am a chief), now we shall wage war or have a big lawsuit."

Such wars are very short and sometimes last for only a few hours, especially if someone is badly wounded or killed. The parties then meet for a settlement, which is reached in one way or another through the zinzonzi and their assistants.

When a war is to start the chief for the accusing party flings his cap to the ground and orders his baleeke to take part. They snatch their guns and fire several salvoes as a sign that war is declared, and the following morning the contestants begin the fighting at some spot between the villages. If the quarrel is of a more serious character and it is feared that the struggle will be bitter, they may call on their friends in neighbouring villages to take part. But in this case it will also be a more difficult matter to conclude peace. When the different parties are obstinate in maintaining their standpoints several persons may often be taken as hostages, who will then become the property of the victorious party when the settlement is made. When the fight is to begin the men rush off over the plain with their guns and begin to insult the opposing party in the coarsest terms. The latter reply, of course, in kind. The women follow in their wake, egging one another on with gestures and insults. Every now and then one of the men will rush forward and fire a shot. The women of this party then cry: "Water, water, fall, termite-hills, roll and be changed to bimfwita-spirits!" They now bend down and turn their posteriors towards the enemy. If there is a paramount chief over the tract he may come in person or send his staff with the order that the war be ended at once, whereupon hostilities are stopped.

Great wars were formerly often fought between the rich and influential chiefs, and the vanquished party had on the conclusion of peace to pay many slaves and other goods to the victor, who reaped much praise for his success. According to the traditions there were in former times many chiefs whose delight was to wage war on their neighbours and usurp positions of power over them. Before firearms came into use the weapons employed were lubota-cudgels, cross-bows and sharp wooden spears. Pits, too, were dug, in the bottoms of which were placed sharp sticks. Crossbows were also set. The last-mentioned methods were resorted to chiefly in the vicinity of the village, so that it might not be taken by surprise. Sharp sticks were planted also on the roads. Thanks to the flintlock it became possible to wage war more effectively, but the armed conflicts were now of shorter duration. Poisoned arrows were never used, nor was there any specially trained army. As a rule, those who were to take part in a campaign were picked with the help of a test. In most cases the favourite wife of the chief would take her husband's war-nkisi and go and place herself with her legs apart over the village road. She tucked her loin-cloth between her legs and let the men pass between them while the women sang: "Hide the children, Mbumba (a nkisi), where they shall go, that they may be flat (against a tree) as lizards. May the guns yonder be as water, but yours burning." Those who stumbled or bumped against the woman's legs were considered not to be good warriors. Their nsala-soul was not whole and they might be wounded or die. Many would go, however, in spite of this, as they wanted to venture their lives. Another method of choosing warriors was by smelling them out with the

help of a nkisi. The women who sang were not allowed to eat and drink until the war was over. If they infringed this prohibition the power of the war-nkisi was impaired, which might result in someone being killed in the fighting. If the battleground was situated at a distance, brave women had to follow the fighters and cry: "Hide the children, Mbumba!" and so on. Others sang to nkisi Nkiduku for protection: "Malala has smeared himself with chalk (i.e. won), wolo.¹ To-morrow we shall go to war, wolo. To-morrow someone shall be killed, wolo."

A number of warriors would be clad in twigs with black streaks on their brows and temples and mamoni-lines made with ground charcoal in the name of some nkisi. Others again would take with them a little nkisi Nsunga (tobacco). They would place this in the fold of their loin-cloth and cry: "Nsunga, Nsunga, Dyamba-Dyamba (hemp), we pray for each other for nsunga, we pray for each other for dyamba", and then set off with jubilation. Sometimes drums and trumpets were taken along, to be beaten and blown to summon auxiliary troops from friends. None, on the other hand, ornamented himself with nkula-red, adornments or fine cloths, for this would draw the attention of the enemy. Only when the war was ended could the victors bathe and deck themselves up.

If possible, prisoners-of-war were taken, for these were held to ransom and a high price had to be paid if they were to be freed to return home. If a warrior was killed his fellows had to hasten to get his corpse into safety, as otherwise it would be burned by the enemy. A prisoner-of-war (kimpundi) who was not ransomed was kept by the victors and received into the kanda of the slaves, but in certain circumstances he might also be received into the village-kanda. The prisoners first had a yoke set on their necks. This was a lubota-tree with a fork, and was so heavy that it took four persons to carry it. When they were released to remain in the village they had first to swear an oath by nkisi Nkondi that they would not attempt to escape. During a war no one may drink water. But those who are thirsty may chew minkwiza.

The flintlocks are blessed by nkisi Mukata, and one who has wounded an opponent strikes his gun on the ground and says: "It is mine, hold him fast!" for then the wounded man cannot go anywhere. He may also, on returning home, place his gun on a shelf in the house, for the wounded man feels the pain so shrewdly that he trembles from top to toe. It can scarcely be said that the art of war was on a very high level, but attempts to deceive the enemy were not infrequent. Certain precautionary measures were always adopted. Thus one who drank urine became strong and could not be hit. The wounded were quickly taken care of, and if several were shot a gong was sounded or the mbyazi-chief came and made an end of the war. Otherwise, the elders might lift up their arms and cry: "E, lubwa (stop, sit down) young men!" Then they would go in among the fighters and cry: "Stop! Let the war be fought with the mouth (lawsuits) and then it stops." Annexations or conquests were in general not the motives for waging war,

¹ Onomatopoeia for the sound of the mawolo-bells.

through arms might be taken up to drive off strange makanda that wanted to make encroachments with violence and war.

One kind of warfare was called ndobe. This was really a matter of surprise manoeuvres that were carried out while the enemy was sleeping. Sometimes prisoners were taken in this way. When a surprise attack was feared the whole village might keep a vigil for several nights. They would call out to one another: "Keep awake, you over there! Don't go to sleep! Wake!" Vigil might be kept also at all the approaches to the village. Skilful zinzonzi had then to be summoned, so that an agreement might be reached and peace concluded. A big lawsuit would result; sometimes only one prisoner might be ransomed, and he was then called nkoodila (the one who was released). If all the prisoners could be ransomed, those who had taken them might give back some of the goods that had been received as a ransom, which was referred to as nsukulu (conclusion). They were then smeared with chalk to show that the lawsuit was at an end. A deceitful chief might sell someone instead, in order to show his power. Ndobe-warfare was regarded as murder, for those who practised it tried at night-time to creep stealthily up to the house of the enemy to listen for the sleeper's respiration or snoring and, guided by this, to fire a shot at his head. It might, however, happen that the person in the house heard the whispering outside and forestalled the enemy by firing first.

The advent of the Europeans in the Congo at first led to a flourishing of trade. In exchange for, amongst other things, palm-kernels, palm-oil, ivory, slaves etc. and, later, rubber the natives got, besides all kinds of rubbish, also such things as salt, cloths and flintlocks. The Europeans penetrated to all parts of the country and were not infrequently well received, for they followed the custom of giving the chiefs big presents for which in return they received all kinds of provisions. Things took a different complexion, however, when the Europeans began to settle in the country, for in some places this aroused hostility. Many of the whites, moreover, were hard and unsympathetic in their dealings with the natives, and bones of contention were not slow to appear.

In large parts of the country the missionaries were the first Europeans to settle. Only very rarely were they received with hostility and no one was killed. But the natives, and especially the older ones, were afraid of them and regarded them as bandoki, as the missionaries wanted to teach them to read and so forth. The younger people and the children, on the other hand, were more accessible to the activities of the missionaries. The medical missionaries, especially, helped to overcome the fears of the natives. The case was otherwise for the officials, Bula Matadi, as they were called after STANLEY, for these introduced compulsory labour of various kinds and, once the country had been occupied, also taxes. The reaction against them was accordingly often very strong, and in some places even armed conflicts arose. But as the natives were never united among themselves in their revolts and never rose up in greater numbers the dominion of the whites was not seriously threatened. They were generally of the opinion that the latter had descended direct from heaven on the thread of the nzambi-spider. This snapped,

however, and the Europeans were then obliged to remain in the Congo, where they wandered about homeless. The coastal peoples knew, of course, that the Europeans had come from the sea, and believed that they had come from their home in the water. Others, again, thought that the whites were the ancestors of the Kongo who had changed their skin and come back from the dead.

The Arabs did not enter the country until quite recent times, and their influence has therefore been very restricted. The natives do not like mulattos, and they have, moreover, not been very numerous in the Congo. This is probably partly explained by the fact that the mothers have got rid of the children in one way or another. Some of the fathers, however, who have been very attached to their mulatto children, have had them brought up by the missionaries.

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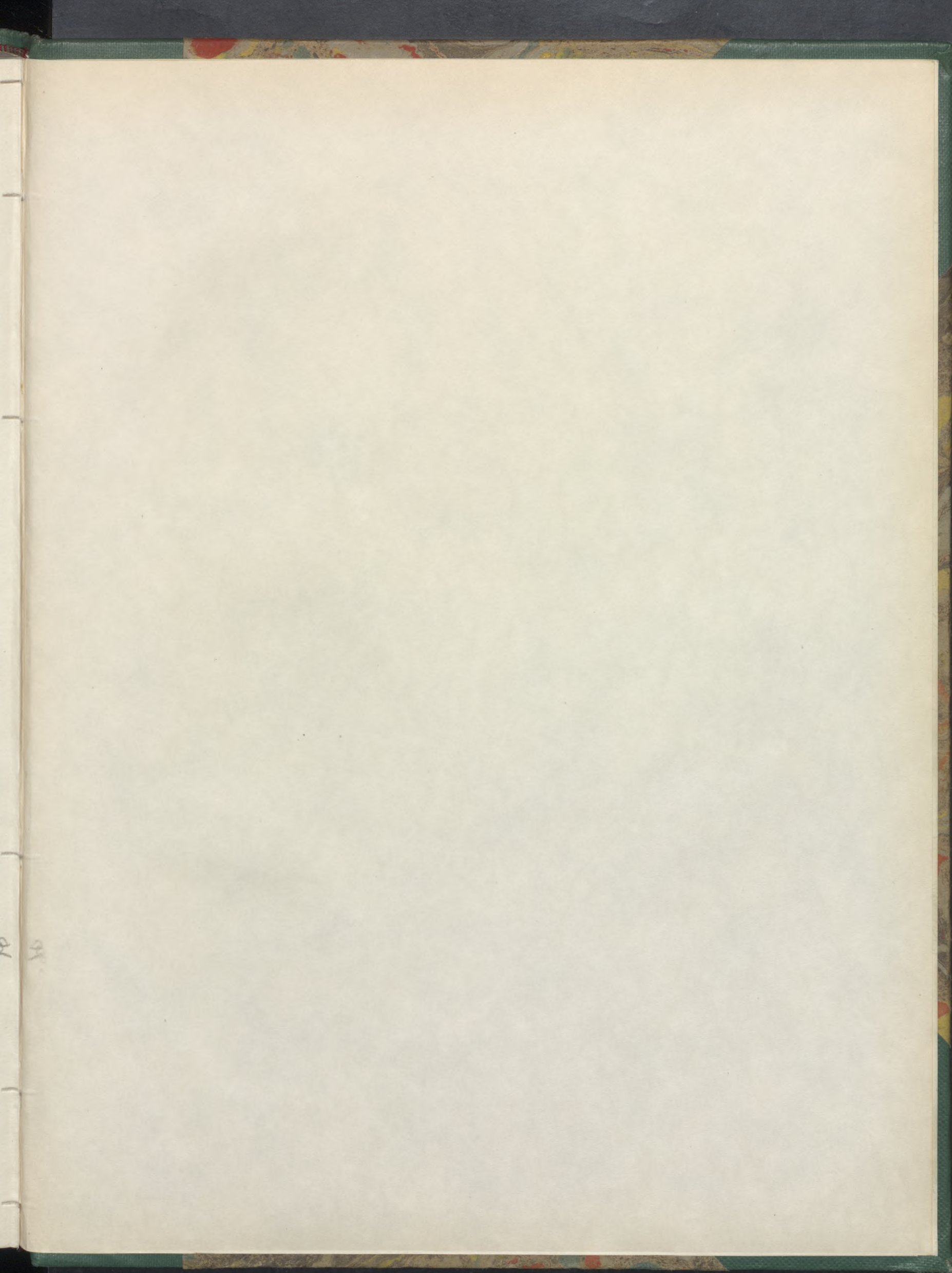
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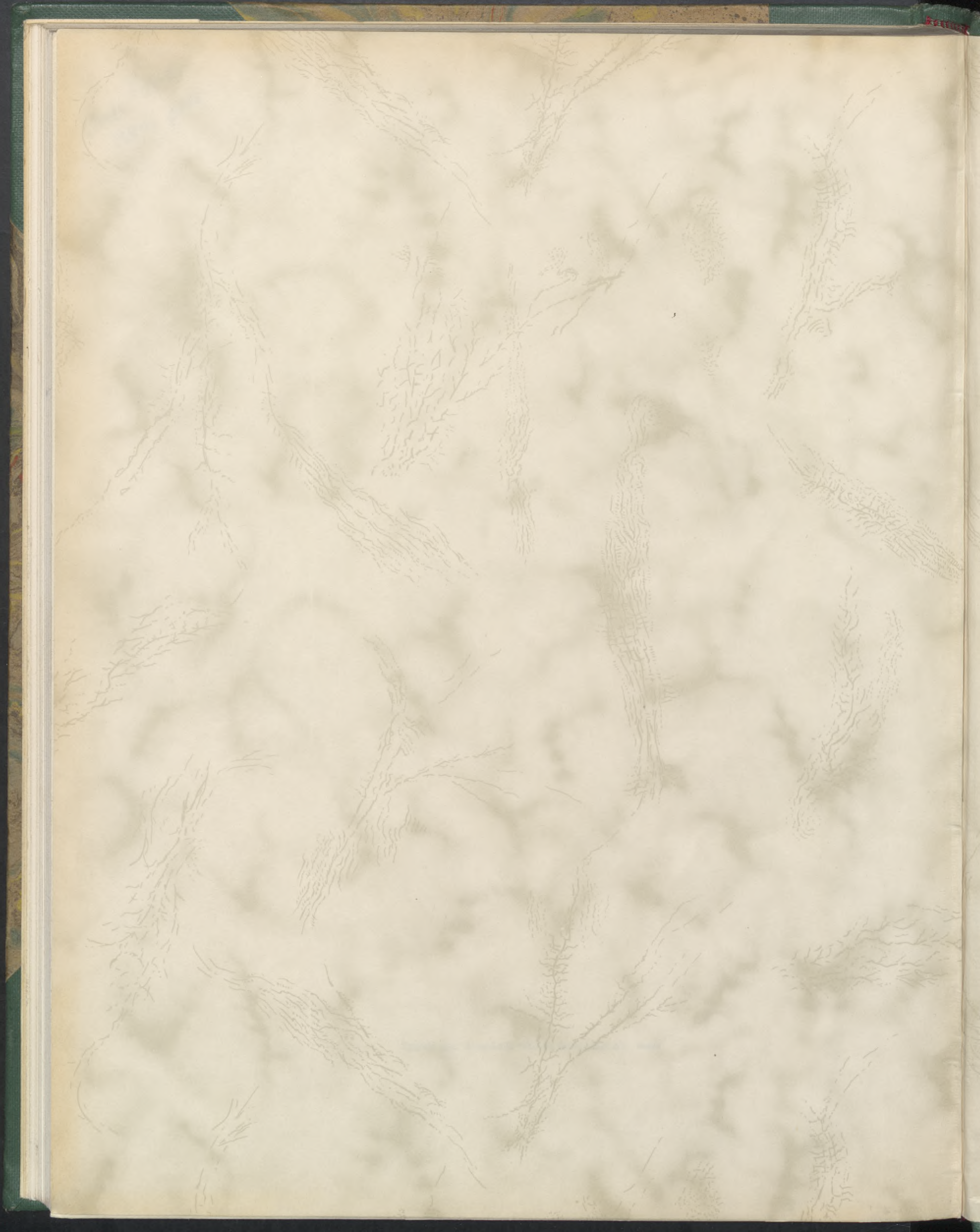
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